

# Bhutto Visits Iran and Pakistan to Persuade Regional Powers to End Opposition to Taleban

## Afghan Government Makes Slight Advances Against Opponents

## Bhutto's Diplomacy

After five weeks of heavy fighting on the outskirts of Kabul, government forces defending the city made some minor advances against the Taleban forces who have put the city under siege. The fighting has coincided with an intensive Pakistani diplomatic effort to oust the Afghan government which has involved visits by Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to both Iran and Uzbekistan and a visit by the Pakistani foreign minister to areas of Afghanistan under rebel control.

The Taleban launched dozens of rocket attacks on Kabul in early November killing scores of civilians. Pro-Government forces were however able to push the Taleban away from some frontline positions south and west of the capital regaining a number of small villages and overrunning more than 20 military posts. The Taleban which had been only three miles from the capital were pushed back at least six more miles. The government forces have

also advanced against the forces of northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum capturing some military posts near the city of Safed Kotal in Samangan province.

### Rabbani's Conditions

On Nov. 7, Afghan President Burhannudin Rabbani made an important speech in which he repeated his willingness to step down under the conditions that a ceasefire was first agreed upon, foreign interference in the country came to an end, and an individual or committee which all the warring sides could agree upon was available to take power. A representative of the opposition Hezb al-Islami faction led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar said Rabbani's speech showed that he was simply playing for time. The Taleban have consistently demanded that Rabbani step down before a

ceasefire and that he hand power over to them and no one else.

"We can only accept a transfer of power to the Taleban," Amir Khan Mutaqqi, a Taleban spokesman said from the Taleban headquarters in Kandahar.

On Nov. 8, U.N. special envoy Mahmoud Mestiri, who has been pressuring Rabbani to resign, announced that he was suspending his mission to the country to allow the different Afghan factions to negotiate among themselves. Mestiri told reporters after meeting Rabbani that he understood that the Afghan president was about to start indirect negotiations with the Taleban. In October a pro-Rabbani delegation held talks with Yunis Khalis, the head of a neutral faction of Hezb al-Islami and Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi, leader of the independent Harakat Inqilab-i-Islami.

"I got the impression that Rabbani is soon going to start indirect negotiations," Mestiri said. "Khalis and Nabi have already sent a delegation to Kandahar and Rabbani is going to send his people to join them."

While the idea of a transfer of power is generally accepted by all the Afghan factions, there is still no agreement on who should lead the country afterwards.

"We have no person in mind," government spokesman Aziz Murad told reporters on Nov. 5. "It could even be a committee if the right people can be found. The only idea we have is that there is an agreement of all sides."

Murad added that his government was not opposed to the Taleban "participating in a committee" but rejected the suggestion that the Taleban take over the presidency or that a transfer of power take place before a ceasefire. Murad did not confirm or deny reports that Rabbani has proposed handing power over to Khalis and Khalis himself has not said whether or not he is willing to take the job.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto visited both Iran and Uzbekistan in an attempt to offset the opposition of both to the student militia which is widely believed to act as an extension of the Pakistani interior ministry.

Iran has described the Taleban as a force created by Pakistan with support from the United States and Saudi Arabia whose function is to create trade route from Central Asia to Pakistan which bypasses Iran.

Iran and Pakistan agreed to boost trade and financial ties after Bhutto's Nov. 5-8 visit to the country an agreements on shipping, maritime trade, investment protection, and the setting up of a joint trade council were signed. However it is doubtful that Bhutto was able to convince the Iranian officials to end their opposition to the Taleban.

"Iran and Pakistan had a tradition of coordinating their policies in the region," political analyst Chang Pahlavan said. "But Islamabad completely surprised Tehran by launching the Taleban."

Bhutto's Nov. 11 trip to Uzbekistan came a few days after the visit of Pakistani Foreign Minister Asfend Ali Mazar-i-Sharif where he met with Abdul Rashid Dostum. Dostum threatened to join the Taleban in joint effort to oust Rabbani but has been held back by Uzbekistan and Russia, both of whom distrust the Taleban and provide Dostum with the military and financial support which enables him to maintain a powerful militia. Bhutto was buffed by Uzbek President Islam Karimov who said the most important thing for Afghanistan was to stop "outside interference," clear reference to Pakistan's alleged support for the Taleban.



NEWS 11/13/95

چه خدای کوی  
منه به وشی هو  
د اویشی کو نده  
پنله ویره

Trust in God,  
but tie  
your camel.

MUSLIM WORLD MONITOR

November 17, 1995

# Tehran-Kabul-Islamabad

Nasim Zehra

Pakistan has found itself in a peculiarly difficult situation over Afghanistan. One, it has produced a mess for policy and two, it has strained its relations with its closest, most strategic ally Iran. But difficult times have fortunately not paralysed our policy makers. To their credit they have been struggling to get out of the mess. Since September hectic diplomatic activities have been underway. These have facilitated between articulating dedication to Afghanistan's right to foreign non-interference in its internal affairs, to President Leghari and Foreign Minister Sardar Asef in September actually cursing the Rabbani government for being "stupid" and trying to impose minority/Tajik rule on the Afghan people.

Today, on the diplomatic front the initiative clearly lies with Tehran. The Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alaaddin Brojerdi remains Iran's point man on Afghanistan. On December 12 he arrived on a few hours trip to Islamabad. He met with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and senior foreign officials. Other than Iran agreeing to hold the 1997 OIC Summit in Pakistan, in the year that Pakistan commemorates its 50th anniversary, not much else has been achieved during Brojerdi's visit.

The main focus of discussion was, where we do go from here on Afghanistan? As an Iranian embassy official put it: "Well, our president had assured Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto during her last month trip to Iran that we will maintain regular exchange on our initiatives on Afghanistan." Obviously, the Prime Minister's decision to receive the deputy foreign minister personally is to signal the importance that a somewhat humbled Islamabad is now attaching to perhaps making amends on the Afghanistan front.

Notably, the Prime Minister's meeting with Brojerdi also indicates Islamabad's realisation that Tehran is no novice on Afghanistan. If anybody, it is Islamabad that is looking shabby with a problematic Afghan policy. Pakistan's Taliban card has not yielded the results Islamabad had hoped it would. Even if Rabbani sits in Kabul beyond his December '94 mandate he got through the 1993 Islamabad Accord, for now the Taliban force may not earn credit for his ouster.

The early military victory of the Taliban predicted by many in Pakistan has not come. The "good news" within a month that the Pakistan foreign minister had promised to some Pakistanis privately may prove to be a pipe dream. "Since December 12 Kabul offensive against the Taliban continues, The more, recent Taliban rocket barrage on the capital was responded by jets bombing the

Taliban positions." In fact, in the recent days some of their early victories, especially around the strategic zones of Kabul, now appear to have been reversed.

Interestingly, on the eve of the Iranian foreign minister's arrival Pakistan's foreign minister was waxing eloquent on the conditions in Afghanistan. He said at the OIC Foreign Ministers' meeting in Guinea: "The situation in the war-torn country shows no let up. The internecine conflict has intensified, causing immense suffering to Afghan people. (For) A country which stood by steadfastly with Afghans during the Soviet invasion we would like to see peace and stability restored to Afghanistan. We have extended our support to all efforts for peace in Afghanistan, notably of OIC and the United Nations."

Of course, upon Afghanistan's political future greatly depends Pakistan's own relations with its Western neighbours and with all the 11 ECO (Economic Co-operation Organisation) members with whom it envisages major trade relations. However, not only is the Afghan situation a lone "spoiler" for Pakistan, the Indian-Central Asian trade connection, too, is of concern.

For example, as the Iranian minister arrived in Islamabad, President Ali Rahkmanov of Tajikistan arrived in India. His visit is dedicated mostly to increasing India-Tajikistan trade. Rahkmanov was received by Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao. Together they discussed ways of strengthening economic ties, increasing sale of iron ore and cotton from Tajikistan to India. Memorandums of Understanding were signed.

The thrust, however, of Brojerdi's visit to Islamabad was essentially to "welcome" Pakistan aboard a joint Afghanistan strategy. "Instead of supporting different groups on the ground let us work together on finding a solution with representation of all Afghan groups, is what Brojerdi really said to us," commented a Pakistani official. However, whether this translates into change at on the ground level where Pakistan continues to support the Taliban while the Iranians support their own Hizb-e-Wahdat group as well as Rabbani, remains unclear.

For all the efforts of the UN, the OIC or any new contraption that is planned, Afghanistan's journey to peace will never begin unless Tehran and Islamabad genuinely change course and practically join hands. But in this unchanged centuries-old practice of inter-state power play, voluntary change of any consequence from either side may not come.

Only recent ground-level developments indicate that Islamabad may actually be boxed in a situation from where exit may only be possible by joining hands with Iran on maybe Tehran's terms — or more likely to the terms that the

military situation would dictate. Clearly, while Pakistanis jumping into the "deep end" on the Afghan situation time and again, since 1979 have led to the failure of understanding the elements and the fluidity of a given situation.

Tehran's approach has been different. More astute and less dogmatic but always very alert to the changing Afghan scenario. Significantly, Tehran is now confident to squarely spell out its position on Afghanistan. Sitting in Pakistan, which vociferously and also practically has remained committed to Rabbani's ouster, Brojerdi defended the legitimacy of the Rabbani regime. "Our reason and logic for considering the government of Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Masood is quite clear. If it was illegitimate why would the UN and the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Conference) recognise it? We respect the international bodies," pat came the reply from Iran's astute diplomat. "Since we consider the Rabbani government as legitimate government," he added, "that is why we are continuously in contact with it. However, we do believe that the government in Afghanistan must represent the wishes of all the Afghan people. All the Mujahideen groups should have due representation in the government."

Tehran's commitment is total, to not only including Rabbani but ensuring Rabbani as a principal partner in any new proposed political setup for Kabul. Tehran's position is pretty much shared by Moscow, Dushanbe and Delhi.

Meanwhile, Islamabad's demand that Rabbani step down and a yet undefined political setup replace him. This is logically as well as empirically unsound. After all, the Moscow-backed President Najibullah's ouster brought anything but peace and development in Afghanistan.

In any event for now in Islamabad there is little optimism on a united Pak-Iran Afghanistan policy. Asked if Brojerdi's visit amounts to offering a new Pak-Iran peace initiative on Afghanistan, a Pakistani official quipped: "Well, he did not say so many words." Who today is on a strong wicket in Afghanistan? Not the Afghan people, who brace themselves for another vicious winter. With little humanitarian aid flowing among the millions of Afghans scattered in the 32 provinces of Afghanistan, they will find it difficult to live in peace armed with insufficient food and clothing. On the power tussle front Rabbani, aided by Moscow, Delhi and Tehran, seems more politically and militarily entrenched in Kabul than his arch foes, the Taliban. Now with cracks appearing in the major anti-Rabbani Peshawar-based coalition, for whatever it is worth, times are improving for Rabbani. But certainly for the Afghans the end of blood-shed and harsh times is nowhere in sight.

NEWS 12/14

# Pakistan, Iran call for national govt in Kabul

By Salim Bokhari

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Iran have agreed that only a broad-based national government can bring peace to the war-torn Afghanistan.

The understanding was reached during meetings of visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alauddin Brojerdi with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and Foreign Secretary Najamuddin Sheikh in Islamabad Tuesday.

Later talking to newsmen at the Iranian embassy, Mr Brojerdi said that there was consensus between the two sides that such a government, having representation of all Mujahideen groups, was the best solution to the Afghan crisis.

The Foreign Office also issued a statement saying Pakistan and Iran have emphasised the need for establishing a broad-based Afghan government which should be reflective of ethnic and demographic realities in Afghanistan.

The Iranian leader did not agree with a questioner that Tehran was supporting induction of a Tajik-led government saying it would not be in the interest of Afghanistan to ignite the issue of different nationalities.

He said the government of Prof Burhanuddin Rabbani was legitimate since it was recognised on all international forums like the United Nations and the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Asked if Iran was keeping a close contact with Taliban leadership, Mr Brojerdi said Iranian missions in Islamabad, Quetta, Peshawar and Herat were in touch with Taliban leadership at diplomatic level.

Mr Brojerdi said Pakistan and India must resolve the long-standing Kashmir dispute through peaceful means to prevent it from becoming a security problem in the region. Mr Brojerdi strongly contradicted the impression that there was any existing territorial dispute between Iran and Pakistan. "There is no such irritant between the two brotherly countries," Brojerdi said.

Earlier Alauddin Brojerdi called on Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and delivered a goodwill message from Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani. Mr Brojerdi, during the meeting, also reiterated the Iranian government's stand that Tehran is keen to work in close collaboration with Islamabad in finding a peaceful settlement of the Afghan issue, sources said.

This understanding was reached between the two states when Prime Minister Bhutto visited Iran last month and held wide-ranging talks with President Rafsanjani.

Besides meeting the Prime Minister, Mr Brojerdi held wide-ranging discussions with Foreign Secretary Najamuddin Sheikh. Informed diplomatic sources said although bilateral, international and regional matters came up for review but the main focus of their deliberations was on Afghanistan.

Both Pakistan and Iran have been closely cooperating to achieve lasting peace in Afghanistan since the signing of Geneva Accord in 1990. Until recently, the two sides had identity of views on the future of neighbouring Afghanistan. But of late, they have developed some divergence in view of latest events in the war-torn Afghanistan.

The Mujahideen leadership has failed to achieve consensus on the future of Afghanistan and the country is further devastated by factional fighting among these groups.

## Hekmatyiar in city to devise future strategy

By MOHAMMAD ZAHEED

PESHAWAR — Hezb-i-Islami chief, Engineer Gulbuddin Hekmatyiar arrived at Peshawar Wednesday evening to preside over an important meeting of the party executive regarding its future military and political strategy. Sources close to Hezb-i-Islami informed that rapid developments in the Afghan political horizon had forced Hekmatyiar to take his partymen into confidence before deciding the party's future role.

The Hezb executive committee meeting which is being held today (Thursday) will review Taliban and President Rabbani's terms and condition for any alliance in the future.

Hezb-i-Islami, which is an important member of the three-party opposition alliance, Shoor-i-Ham Ahangi since long has been asking for a joint military alliance against Rabbani government to pave way for a neutral interim government, but hitherto Hezb-i-Islami has failed to remove its differences with Taliban on the issue. Similarly, Shoor-i-Ham Ahangi despite months-long negotiation has not yet been able to reach a joint strategy on the removal of Rabbani government.

At one time even it was said that the final draft of the agreement was awaiting the formal signing by Taliban and Shoor-i-Ham Ahangi.

But later both developed differences over the power sharing formula.

Shoor-i-Ham Ahangi was demanding prime ministership, ministries of defence and interior in the future government while Taliban were insisting on that such issues should be decided after the fall of Kabul.

At the same time Taliban are reportedly saying that the ministries of defence and interior would be with them and are offering portfolios of health, education and agriculture to Shoor-i-Ham Ahangi. As a result of the stalemate between the two resulted in frustration Kabul regime started contacting the opposition for alliance.

However, Hezb sources say that since long directly or indirectly Rabbani regime has been contacting Afghan opposition for a political rapprochement. But the opposition's demand that they would accept nothing short of Rabbani's removal was the main obstruction in such a deal, said the sources.

According to some Afghan sources, majority members of the Hezb executive committee have reportedly endorsed the idea of joining the Rabbani government, provided certain proposals on power-sharing accepted by to the latter.

Hezb chief, during his stay in Peshawar, will also visit Shamshato camp to offer 'fateha' over the demise of a relative of commander Fazle Haq Mujahid, who is also the corps commander of Nangarhar.

Mr Brojerdi who has been shuttling between Tehran and Kabul on different occasions has already met most of the Mujahideen leaders besides President Prof Rabbani and other senior officials. In his meetings with Gen Rashid Dostum and Hizb-e-Wahdat leader Karim Khalili, Mr Brojerdi has tried to persuade them to settle political dispute through negotiations.

Mr Brojerdi was scheduled to fly to Karachi on a PIA Night Coach for his onward journey to Tehran.

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## Iran and Afghanistan

# First things first

MASHHAD

**N**EEDS must when the Taliban drives.

That is the view in Iran as it looks wearily at its war-torn neighbour Afghanistan. Officially, the Iranian government backs President Burhanuddin Rabbani there, and opposes the Taliban "student" militia trying to overthrow him. It dislikes these rebels partly because they are militant Sunni Muslims, not Shias; partly because their social policy is even more restrictive than its own; mainly because it believes they are controlled by Pakistan. But Iran has a problem more troubling than any of these: the Afghan refugees within its borders. If it can push them back home, it does not much

care into whose hands—and in western Afghanistan it is the Taliban that is in control.

The Taliban militia last September seized the province of Herat, forcing its governor to flee to Iran. The Iranians, taken by surprise, closed the border, halting the repatriation of Afghan refugees for nearly two months. Since then, though, Iran has made overtures to Taliban leaders in Herat, offering to supply wheat and oil. "All they want now is stability in Afghanistan so they can kick the refugees out," says an American who fought alongside the mujahideen in Afghanistan and now lives in Iran. "They'll do a deal with anyone."

Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Iran has played host to, at a peak, some 3m Afghans. For the past three years it has been encouraging them to leave. Now its patience is wearing thin. "When you have guests, there comes a time when you have to ask them to leave," says Aaleeddin Boroujerdi, a deputy foreign minister. "It is the Afghans' Islamic duty to go home."

There are more down-to-earth reasons. The Afghans get free education and medical care and can buy subsidised food and fuel. The \$12m a year supplied by UN refugee programmes covers only a fraction of the cost. Since the Afghans have been allowed to live and work almost anywhere, Iranians accuse them of stealing jobs—in a country with almost 20% unemployment. They are also routinely blamed for rising crime and a thriving cross-border drugs trade.

How many have gone home is unclear. The Afghans are not registered and not all who go are counted. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has returned 500,000 Afghans. The Iranians say another 1m have gone without UN assistance. Many of the unknown number still left have vanished into the semi-legal world of informal employment; police squads have recently taken to raiding street markets and building sites in search of illegal Afghans. Those without papers are detained. Many are then summarily repatriated.

Many of the Afghans are desperate to stay in the country. "Iran is heaven for them

compared with Afghanistan," says Sudang Kaentarakool, head of the UNHCR office in Mashhad. "Bread is cheap, schooling is free and the streets are safe. Many don't even know Afghanistan: 60% were born here."

The UNHCR is in a difficult position. It



assists with repatriation, but it must also try to ensure that those who go are safe. With Afghan factions still fighting a vicious war

around Kabul, the refugees could be returning to their deaths. So, while UN staff on the border dole out sacks of wheat and \$25 a head to those on their way out, senior officials spend their time persuading the government to have patience.

Patience is easy at the moment: the winter weather has slowed repatriation to a trickle. But the respite will not last. An Iranian newspaper editor sums up Iranian frustration: "This is the last bloody time we do anything humanitarian. Look at the mess it's got us into. We welcomed the Afghans with open arms and all we got was crime and drugs."

The Economist 1/6

## Taliban ready for talks with Iran

From Rahimullah Yusufzai

**PESHAWAR:** The Taliban leadership have reiterated their offer to hold talks with Iran to resolve their disputes.

Herat governor Maulvi Yar Mohammad told The News by telephone that he made the offer during a meeting with Iranian consul general. "I proposed him in our meeting in Herat that either Iran should send a high-level delegation to Afghanistan to talk to us or allow the Taliban to send their representatives to Iran," he informed. He said the Iranian consul general had promised to convey the offer to Tehran.

In the recent past, the Taliban leadership made public its intention to send a delegation to Tehran to discuss contentious issues. The Iranian government didn't respond to the offer. However, Iranian diplomats in Islamabad, Peshawar, Quetta and Herat have established contacts with the Taliban. But high-level meetings between the two sides have yet to take place.

Maulvi Yar Mohammad said the Iranian consul general assured him that Tehran had no intention of interfering in Afghanistan's affairs or supporting anti-Taliban forces who took refuge in Iran after their defeat in Herat. He argued that the Taliban wanted friendly ties with the Iranians as they were both Muslims and neighbours.

The Herat Governor informed that he also raised the issue of the opening of an Afghan consulate in the Iranian city of Mashhad as Iran already had a consulate in Herat. He said the Taliban wanted their diplomatic presence in Mashhad on a reciprocal basis and also due to their belief that the move could help them

forge meaningful ties with Tehran. He added that granting of visas to Afghan nationals visiting Iran was also discussed in the meeting.

The Iranian government have publicly backed the Rabbani government in Kabul, which the Taliban have vowed to oust. Tehran suspect the Taliban to be in the pay of the US, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and was alarmed when they captured Nimruz, Farah and Herat provinces bordering Iran from the Rabbani government in September. The Taliban have accused Iran of giving refuge and arming Afghans loyal to Kabul for an eventual attack on Herat.

Meanwhile, a Rabbani government delegation has reached Moscow to hold talks with Russian government for sending vital supplies to the besieged capital of Kabul.

A report in BBC Pashto service Wednesday said the delegation is led by civil aviation minister Dr Abdul Rahmani, who is a close aide of military strongman Ahmad Shah Masood. There was no official comment on the visit either by Kabul or Moscow.

The report added that another Masood aide, Dr Abdullah, had also travelled to Iran and Central Asian republics recently to apprise them of the situation in Kabul and seek their support for the Rabbani government. Dr Abdullah had also pleaded with Russia and the Central Asian countries to put pressure on northern Afghanistan warlord Gen. Rasheed Dostum to mend his fences with President Rabbani and abandon the anti-Rabbani alliance. NEWS 12/14

## Masud seeks Gulbadin's help for peace in Kabul

NATION 12/13

From Our Correspondent

**PESHAWAR** — The main Afghan war-lord and right hand of the President Rabbani, Engineer Ahmed Shah Masud, through a letter has suggested the Hizbe-Islami of Gulbadin Hikmatyar to forget the past clashes and let join hands for building up a consensus to resolve the problem.

The Hizbe Islami mouthpiece, daily *Shahadat* in its Tuesday issue states that Ahmed Shah Masud offered negotiation with Hizbe Islami through a letter.

Through his message, Mr Masud declared that Kabul Administration is ready to honour all conditions of Hizbe Islami aimed at joining hands with the government. Mr Masud states that Afghanistan is passing through a crucial stage of its history, therefore its leaders should fulfil their responsi-

bilities.

Mr Masud also added that Kabul administration is ready to sit across the table with all forces to sort out modalities aimed at pulling Afghanistan and its people out of existing crisis. In this connection, Mr Masud said that they also welcome efforts of the SCCIRA for resolving the dispute. The Kabul administration for reconciliation also ready to extend support to the international and regional mediators.

The daily further states that responding to the offers of Ahmed Shah Masud, the Hizbe Islami reaffirmed its stand that it favours mutual understanding amongst all forces to find out an amicable solution to the problem. It declared that unless a consensus amongst all the jehadic and political forces no one could ensure an end to ongoing fighting in Afghanistan.

NEWS 12/13

## Motive behind murder of Zahir Shah's relatives still not known

From Abdullah Jan

**PESHAWAR:** Police are yet to find out the motive behind the murder of two female relatives of the former Afghan King Zahir Shah, who were gunned down at a refugees camp, near Nowshera on Sunday.

Dr Naheed Azmat and a nurse, Raazia Shafaq, were killed by unidentified murderers at their private clinic at Jalozi Refugees Camp in Pubbi, near Nowshera.

Though the two were gunned down on Sunday, police came to know about the double murder on the morrow when they had been buried in Peshawar.

It was learnt that incharge of the Jalozi Camp, Malik Dost Mohammad, tried to hide the murder from the police. Dost Mohammad is a close relative of Ittehad-e-Islami's chief, Professor Abdul Rub Rasool Sayyaf, whose party is dominant at the camp.

Interestingly, the bodies have been laid to rest without an autopsy and it is due to the fact that police didn't know about the murder in time.

It was learnt that Dr Azmat's husband has asked the authorities to exempt the bodies from post-mortem. He has submitted an application to the assistant commissioner, Nowshera, in this regard. However, a final decision on the issue is still awaited.

None of the deceased's relatives came up to file an FIR with the police, which reported a case against the unidentified murderers.

Eyewitnesses said a green Land Cruiser was seen outside the clinic on December 10 which left soon. After sometime, three persons appeared and sent a child inside the clinic. When the kid came out, two of them entered the premises and shot dead the two ladies with .30 bore pistols. Police have found four bullets from the place of murder.

## Two female relatives of Zahir Shah gunned down

From Abdullah Jan

**PESHAWAR:** Two female relatives of the former Afghan King Zahir Shah were gunned down by unidentified persons at Jalozi camp for Afghan refugees near Nowshera.

Naheed Azmat, a nurse, and Dr Raazia Shafaq were running a private clinic at Jalozi Refugees Camp at Pubbi, near Nowshera and were killed by four armed persons Sunday evening. They were buried at Peshawar on Monday.

Dr Azmat happens to be grand daughter of ex-monarch Zahir's brother, while Dr Shafaq was Azmat's niece. Dr. Azmat's father, Ghulam Haider remained the governor of Parwan and Mazar-e-Sharif provinces during Zahir Shah rule.

Eyewitnesses said four armed persons reached the camp in a green jeep, with tinted glasses. They rushed into the clinic and gunned down the two doctors. Both of the deceased received one bullet each in their heads and chests.

Dr Azmat breathed her last on the spot while Dr Shafaq succumbed to the injuries at Al-Jehad Hospital at the camp. Dr Azmat was living in Nauthia Peshawar Cantonment and had five kids including four daughters

and an eight-year-old son. Dr Shafaq was unmarried.

Deputy Commissioner, Nowshera said the police as yet was unaware about the motive behind the double murder. He said it may be an act of terrorism. He admitted that Afghans never killed women in the past and the incident is the first of its kind.

Hezb-i-Islami (Hekmatyar) leaders denied reports that the two ladies were active members of their party. "The two names look unfamiliar to me. I am even unaware of the two murders," said the party's deputy chief Engineer Qutbuddin Hilal. Another Hezb-i-Islami leader, Haji Fateed said Jalozi Camp belonged to, Ustad Sayyaf's Ittehad-i-Islami and his party people didn't live there due to rivalry between the two parties. "Even I had to shift to Peshawar from there, due to insecurity," he remarked.

SP Nowshera Naem Khan told The News that the police on its own had taken cognizance of the double murders and become the complainant in the case. He said a little boy who worked in a cycle repair shop was the lone witness to the murders. He narrated how the boy saw three men entering the clinic and fleeing towards the refugees camp after committing the murders. NEWS 12/19

## Qazi leaves for Jalalabad to set up camp office

From Ismail Khan

PESHAWAR: Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan Qazi Humayun Saturday left here for Jalalabad, Capital of eastern Nangrahar province, to open a camp office at Pakistan's Consulate there.

The ambassador accompanied by a dozen staff members including Military Attache Brig. Ashraf Afridi, First Secretary Nisar Ali, Third Secretary Ijaz and Pakistan's Consul General in Jalalabad Shafiqullah Shinwari crossed the Pak-Afghan border at Torkham at 2:50 pm and headed straight for Jalalabad.

Officials at the Pakistan Foreign Office in Islamabad were not available for immediate comments but a source said the arrangement was a temporary and the embassy in Kabul would be reopened as soon as peace returned to Kabul and security situation improved in the war-battered Afghan capital. ... NEWS 12/10

From AFGHANews 10/31/95:

Babrak Karmal, the founder of Parcham faction of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan which ruled Afghanistan from 1978 to 1992, left the border town of Hayratan on August 31 to live in Russia.

Babrak lived in exile after division in the ruling PDPA and was brought to Kabul by the Red Army in December 27, 1979. He went to Moscow after Najib replaced him as the head of the former communist regime in Kabul in 1986. He returned to Kabul in 1991, ten months before the Mujahideen's victory.

Babrak lived under protection of Dostum in the north of the country and spent most of his time in the border town of Hayratan. Most of the close relatives of Babrak live in Moscow. He has been working as a close advisor to General Dostum and creation of the Junbish is said to be Babrak's initiative under which the former communists are organized.

## Taliban artillery pounds Kabul, kills three civilians

AFF/IRNA

KABUL: Three people, including two civilians, were killed and two others injured when Taliban militiamen launched an artillery attack on the besieged Afghan capital, witnesses and defence sources said.

The two civilians were killed instantly when the first of a salvo of about five shells rained down on a city centre street at about 10 am, while a third man, an army officer, died in the same blast, witnesses told AFP.

The lower half of one of the dead civilians had been completely vapourised, leaving only a pool of blood and a smattering of body parts scattered on the road.

Survivors nearby took cover in drains and against walls as the barrage lasting about 15 minutes battered the vicinity of the presidential palace. "The shells came in as the poor people of the city were walking in the streets on their way to get provisions for the winter days," said Humayoon, a security guard at the deserted Italian embassy near where the three pedestrians were killed.

The other four shells fell in nearby areas of the war-torn capital, causing no reported casualties, although one struck the compound of the state radio and television station, hospital staff and officials said. "This was a deliberate attack by the Taliban on residential areas which again killed innocent Afghans who were just trying to survive the winter here," a defence ministry official said. No independent confirmation of who was responsible for the attack was immediately available.

The morning salvo was the first in more than a week to claim civilian lives in this city which has been battered by 16 years of almost constant war. The beleaguered government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani has accused the turbaned militiamen of responsibility for the rocket, artillery and aerial bombing attacks on Kabul over the last six weeks since the Taliban arrived on the outskirts of the city. The Islamic warriors have claimed responsibility for some of the attacks, but have routinely claimed the bombs and shells only struck military targets, a charge which residents here deny.

The International Committee of the Red Cross last week condemned the "indiscriminate" shelling, rocketing and bombing of the city, saying such acts increased the suffering of the already struggling population and showed "a lack of respect by the warring factions for civilians".

The Taliban, who emerged suddenly from the Quranic schools of Pakistan last year, have vowed to clean up corruption and banditry in Afghanistan and to impose Islamic law over the whole country. They have blockaded the freezing capital on three major frontlines near Kabul since October, when their last major attempt to break into the capital was repulsed.

Meanwhile, Abdulkarim Khalili, one of the leaders of the Hizbe Wahdat-e-Islami, has declared general amnesty in areas under his control. In an interview, Khalili, who controls Bamian province and Hezarejat region, said those who repent their past deeds and joined the party can return to their homes and lead normal lives.

NEWS 12/13

## Hizb-e Wahdat leader declares amnesty

KABUL (IRNA) - Abdulkarim Khalili, one of the leaders of the Hizbe Wahdat-e-Islami (Islamic Unity Party) has declared general amnesty in the areas under his control.

In an interview Sunday, Khalili who

controls Bamian province and Hezarejat region, said those who have repented of their past deeds and joined the party can return to their homes and lead their normal life.

Those who return under the Amnesty decree should guarantee that they would not embark on any action that are against the interest of the Afghan people in the future, he said.

Thousands of Afghan families have been displaced since the fall of Bamian to Khalili faction, with some fleeing to Kabul. NATION 12/13

# Kabul fails to implicate Pakistan in internal matters

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 13 (APP) The Kabul regime has found itself in complete isolation in its efforts to implicate Pakistan in its internal troubles, and in the process has made a United Nations debate on the situation in Afghanistan highly unlikely.

The debate on Afghanistan was postponed on December 4 to this week, but it is now surmised that it would take place, if at all, on December 22, the last day of the current General Assembly Session.

A 16-nation Working Group led by Professor Tono Eitel, permanent representative of Germany to the United Nations, had prepared two comprehensive resolutions on Afghan situation for discussion in the General Assembly. These resolutions, prepared after three weeks of hard deliberations were about the implications of the situation in Afghanistan for international peace and security, and for the provision of emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan.

Sensing that the main resolution would insist for immediate transfer of power from the Rabbani regime, the Kabul representative to the United Nations, Dr

Ravan Farhadi, sought a delay in the debate by raising an emphatical objection against one operative paragraph, which had been included in the main draft at

the suggestion of the Egyptian Ambassador, Dr Nabil Elaraby.

The paragraph objected by the Kabul regime inter alia suggested issuing a call from the international community "to promote stability in Afghanistan and thereby curtail the deleterious consequences of international terrorism and drug-trafficking, the detrimental effects of which extend beyond the region."

The Kabul representative in an immediate letter to the German ambassador is reported to have claimed that this particular paragraph insinuated that international terrorism existed in Afghanistan. He charged the United Nations with intervening in matters which were essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of a member state.

The Kabul delegate, has instead, circulated its own resolution for the consideration of the General Assembly.

It is understood that the Kabul regime adopted this childish stratagem to avoid an all round condemnation in the General Assembly. Once it realised the wide

support for the 16-nation Working Group's resolution, it had no option but to create hurdles in the holding of the much-awaited debate.

It may be mentioned that the Kabul regime had also miserably failed to raise a debate in the Security Council on its allegation of Pakistan's involvement in its internal affairs. A letter written to the Security Council President by the Kabul's Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr Ghafoorzai, has not even figured even in informal consultations.

Meanwhile the second part of the UN Secretary General's report on the political situation in Afghanistan, covering developments from mid-September to November 1995, has been released today.

The Secretary General in his report has surmised that Afghanistan was now at a critical crossroads — either to follow the route to peace through dialogue and negotiations in a spirit of give-and-take, and with the assistance of the United Nations and cooperation of the neighbouring and other interested countries — or to follow the route of continued war and confrontation where today's victory may be tomorrow's vanquished.

The Secretary General reported that unfortunately, the current leaders of the principal factions seemed to favour the latter route, notwithstanding the evident longing of their people for an end to almost two decades of strife.

The Secretary General, however, has urged the international community not to lose interest in Afghanistan, and not to become accustomed to the country's plight.

THE MUSLIM 12/14

## The Taliban carry out religious cleansing

The Taliban have begun to force the Shia population of Nimroz and Farah to have to move away from the areas close to the borders with Iran, Radio Iran reported.

The radio said the Shias are forced to sell their houses and farms at nominal prices and go to Kandahar. The radio said some Shias have been imprisoned by the Taliban who demand up to 10 million Afghani for their release.

AFGHANews 10/31

## Car Bomb Kills 35 at Pakistan-Afghan Border

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Dec. 21 (Reuters) — A car bomb exploded today outside a department store here in northwestern Pakistan, killing at least 32 people and wounding 117, doctors and witnesses said. Hospital doctors said the death toll could rise because some of the wounded are in critical condition.

Officials said the dead included a daughter and two grandchildren of the provincial Governor, Khurshid Ali Khan, and a daughter and a nephew of a provincial minister.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, and authorities said they did not know who had carried it out.

The Chief of the Provincial Police, Masood Shah, said he suspected an Afghan group because of a series of recent smaller bombs in the region that he blamed on Afghans. Peshawar has a large population of Afghan refugees from the war that has raged in neighboring Afghanistan since 1979.

The police said the bomb went off at 6:30 P.M. outside the Wadood & Sons department store in a busy

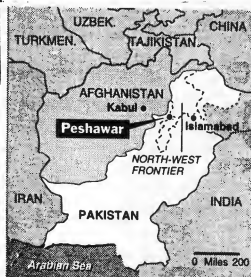
street in Saddar Bazaar. Today, the eve of the Muslim Sabbath, the area was crowded with shoppers. The explosion set several cars on fire.

"I cannot say right now who was responsible," said Aftab Sherpao, Chief Minister of the North West Frontier Province, of which Peshawar is the capital.

A senior police official said the explosion apparently was caused by a 55-pound time bomb. "This is the worst bomb here for a long time," said the official, Ghulam Hussain.

A car bomb on Nov. 19 wrecked the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, killing 16 people and wounding more than 60. The Muslim militant group Jihad, one of three Egyptian organizations that claimed responsibility for the embassy explosion, warned Pakistan last week to stop extraditing Muslim militants to Egypt.

"We warn the Government of Pakistan that it will pay a heavy price if it continues to hand over Islamists living on its territory," said a Dec. 14 statement signed by the Vanguard of the Conquest in Egypt, a revival of



The New York Times

A car bomb tore apart a crowded store in a bazaar in Peshawar.

the Jihad group, which assassinated President Anwar el-Sadat in 1981.

Egypt and Pakistan signed an extradition treaty in July 1994. Islamabad says it has extradited 10 of the 11 people wanted by Cairo; the 11th is a fugitive.

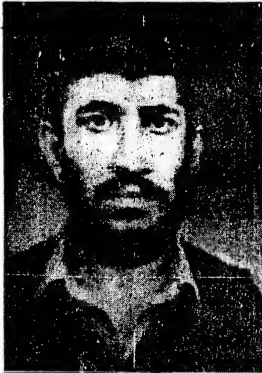
There was no immediate evidence to link Jihad with the blast today.

NYT 12/22



# Afghan prime suspect in Peshawar blast

From Rahmullah Yusufzal



**Abdul Matin, prime suspect**

PESHAWAR: A Persian-speaking Afghan believed to be on the pay roll of Kabul regime was Tuesday named as the main suspect in the Peshawar bomb explosion which killed around 40 people on December 21.

Syed Masud Shah, IGP of NWFP told a press conference that Abdul Matin, son of Abdul Latif, and another Persian speaking Afghan had bought the brown-colour 1974 model Toyota-corolla car used in the blast a day before the incident from a motor bargain center on Jamrud Road here.

He said the gray colour 1989 model Toyota double-cabin was the getaway vehicle in which the accused fled after parking the car-bomb in the congested Peshawar Saddar.

"You decide whether the Rabbani government is involved or not," replied Shah when pressed to give a categorical answer about Kabul involvement in this act of terrorism. However, he stressed that both the suspects, Persian-speaking, left nothing to doubt as President Rabbani, his top military commander Ahmed Shah Masud and most of his supporters are Persian-speaking Tajiks.

The IGP also pointed out that the blast wasn't an individual act of the two suspects. He added that gangs of Afghan saboteurs had exploded bombs in the NWFP in recent weeks.

Without giving any time frame,

Shah said he was hopeful of tracking down the suspects soon. He declined to say whether the two wanted Afghans were still hiding in Pakistan.

He explained that Abdul Matin's facial picture was reconstructed after an exhaustive and scientific exercise involving police experts, owner and employees of the motor bargain centers who sold him the car and the injured persons who may have seen him parking the bomb-packed vehicle.

Shah said a police expert, Aftab, sent by Punjab IGP took between 100 hyphen 150 photographs of Afghan Monday in Peshawar had random and later separately showed them to the three owners and an employee of the concerned motor bargain centre. He said Aftab reconstructed picture of Matin and his accomplice on the basis of their facial features recollected by owners of the motor bargain centres and also from photographs of Afghan show to them. "There was no witch-hunt. We didn't nab 100 or 200 Afghans to find out the culprits. Instead we have methodically gone about our task," he stressed.

The IGP said the police had sketched Matin's accomplice as well but it wasn't being released as yet. He said the decision to publicise Matin's sketch in posters promising Rs 10 million reward for providing information leading to arrest other accused was taken after some deliberation because it would alert him. However, he was convinced the move would prove useful in apprehending this tall-statured, 27 or 28 year-old Afghan.

He made it clear that the owners of the motor bargain centre were not involved in the conspiracy of bomb explosion and had in fact been very cooperative with the police.

He said the suspects had bought the car for Rs 81,000 from after hectic two-day bargaining and gave their address as Hayatabad Township, Peshawar, in the receipt form. He added that the car was registered in Karachi and was sold to the auto dealer got the car for Rs 70,000 on Nov 27 by a person belonging to Badahber, near here.

In reply to a question Masud said the four Afghans arrested at the Pak-Afghan border, Torkam, a day after the blast were freed after being found innocent.

According to the IGP, Matin was well-versed in ex-terrorism and the police found mention of him in intelligence records in Pakistan. He pointed out that Matin's expertise could be gauged from the fact that he left his car's headlights on as he searched for parking space in Peshawar Saddar before timing the car-bomb explosion. He said that between 25 to 30 kilos plastic explosives were used in the car-bomb.

Shah, who earlier in the day briefed the prime minister in Islamabad about the progress being made in unearthing the conspiracy of bomb explosion, said he would be sending a detailed proposal to the Federal Government today (Wednesday) for setting up a crisis management centre in NWFP to tackle terrorism.

He said he was in favour of making it mandatory for all foreigners to submit their identity card and Passport numbers and seek police permission while making major purchases like buying a vehicle. He also backed a proposal to register all Afghan refugees living out side their camps to keep an eye on their movements.

NEWS 12/29

## Jihad by-product



NEWS

11/23



# 37 Killed In Bombing Of Kabul

By Peter Greste  
Reuters

KABUL, Afghanistan, Nov. 26—Rebel planes bombed residential areas of Kabul today, killing 37 people and wounding more than 140 in the heaviest air raid on the besieged Afghan capital for more than a year, government sources said.

A Defense Ministry spokesman blamed the attack on rebels of the Islamic Taliban militia who are fighting to overthrow President Burhanuddin Rabbani. At least nine bombs were dropped by Su-22 planes, none hitting a military target, he said.

A ministry statement also accused neighboring Pakistan of responsibility, saying it had "strong evidence" indicating Islamabad had given technical and financial aid in repairing the jets seized by Taliban from the western town of Herat in August.

Pakistan denied it had given Taliban any such assistance. "This is utter nonsense," a Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman in Islamabad said.

"The Taliban used three Su-22 bombers in the air raid," Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman Amrullah said. "They made two passes over the city 15 minutes apart."

At least 12 people were killed when one bomb destroyed three homes and badly damaged four others in the western suburb of Wazir Abad. Neighbors said a 1,100-pound parachute bomb exploded in the air.

A similar bomb killed seven people in the suburb of Qalai Fatullah in a three-story mud-brick building, where neighbors said three families lived. The building collapsed.

Dozens of rescuers dug through the rubble but found only corpses, including those of two infants.

"This is the most barbaric war," said a neighbor as he watched the rescuers cover a 2-year-old dragged from the dust. "The Taliban are more cruel than Ghengis Khan. Even the Russians were not as bad as these people," he said.



Afghans in Kabul survey damage to houses hit by bomb from a plane of the Islamic Taliban forces, who seized Soviet-built bombers from government.

"This bombing is the biggest crime," said another resident, Najim Khan. "God will not forgive those who committed this."

Two other smaller parachute bombs exploded above the Supreme Court compound east of the city. Witnesses said seven people were killed there.

"Some of the dead people were waiting for a bus and others were just walking along like me," said a soldier, who was shielded from the blast by a passing car. "If the Taliban want to fight against us, they are welcome to attack us on the front line. Why do they bomb innocent civilians here?" he asked.

The parachute bombs are designed to explode about 90 feet above ground, spraying shrapnel.

One young girl was killed by a cluster bomb that landed beneath Maranjan Hill in an eastern suburb, and four other devices exploded harmlessly on an uninhabited mountainside near Baghe Bala in the north of the capital.

THE WASHINGTON POST  
NOVEMBER 27, 1995

Knight-Ridder Tribune

Rebel bombing kills 35, wounds 140

A few more details from the

San Francisco Chronicle

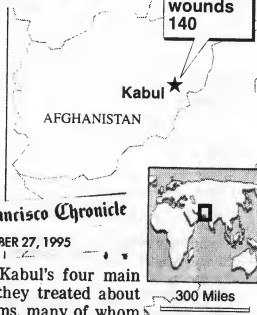
NOVEMBER 27, 1995

Doctors at Kabul's four main hospitals said they treated about 150 bomb victims, many of whom died. The death toll was said to be 37.

The air raid followed two nights of fierce fighting between the Taleban and government fighters.

The Taleban is attacking Kabul on at least four fronts in an attempt to capture the city and force Rabbani from power. It has enforced an energy blockade on Kabul apparently designed to freeze its defenders into submission during the approaching winter.

The Taleban has rejected a U.N. proposal for a multifactional council to replace Rabbani's government and has pledged to seize Kabul by force.





John Giannini for The New York Times

Traders on bicycles take firewood to Kabul in the shadow of the ruined former Parliament building.

## Afghan Capital Grim as War Follows War

By JOHN F. BURNS

KABUL, Afghanistan, Feb. 4 — Before the pink light of dawn could touch the snowy peaks of the Hindu Kush mountains around this ruined capital, five young Afghans met on a bitterly cold morning last week for the gamble of a lifetime.

On borrowed bicycles, they planned to cross siege lines to the south of the city, load up with sacks of flour, cans of gasoline and bundles of firewood, and be back home by noon.

From the 300 percent price difference between the Kabul bazaars and the traders outside the city, they calculated that they would make enough money to pay the bicycle owners and keep their families from the hunger and cold of Kabul for a month.

A few hours later, one of the five, a former professional boxer named Hamid, was near death in the intensive care unit of a hospital about a mile behind the front lines. Villagers who found him said four of the five young men had been killed by machine-gun fire that met them as they rounded a corner in the no man's land separating Afghan Government troops from the besieging forces of the Taliban, a militant Islamic force that pushed to within a mile of Kabul's outskirts last fall.

In the dim room where Hamid lay semiconscious, the only sounds

were the groans and wheezing of others fighting for their lives from wounds suffered in bombing raids, mine explosions, artillery barrages and forays across the front lines by people like Hamid, which cost the lives of at least 20 of the traders last week alone.

Occasionally, one of the wounded cried out weakly: "Allah. Allah. Grant us mercy."

This spring, it will be 18 years since Marxist conspirators overthrew the Afghan President and set off a civil war. Next week, it will be seven years since the withdrawal of the last of the Soviet troops who invaded the country in December 1979, ostensibly in support of those Marxist rulers, only to be bludgeoned in a nine-year conflict with American-backed Muslim guerrillas that devastated much of the country and gravely weakened the Soviet Union itself.

In April, it will be four years since the puppet Communist Government that the Russians left behind in Kabul finally collapsed, giving way to a new civil war between rival Muslim groups whose enmity for one another turned out to be as great as their hatred of the Soviet invaders.

### Ruinous Times

## Wars Bring Misery And Exile to Millions

The miseries heaped on this an-

cient land by the years of fighting are captured in the grim statistics kept by United Nations officials who try to lessen the unending suffering with their relief efforts.

In a country that had a population of 15.5 million in the last census before the Communist takeover, at least one million people have been killed, and two million displaced from their homes to other towns and cities inside Afghanistan. Six million others have been driven across the borders into Pakistan and Iran, less than half of whom have returned since the end of Communist rule in 1992.

About two million others, international relief agencies estimate, have been permanently disabled, either physically or mentally.

On the crumbling sidewalks of Kabul, in the overcrowded hospital wards and at the brick-oven bakeries that face clamoring crowds at first light each day, there is an angry consensus that no time since the Communist coup in April 1978 has been as bitter as now.

So dispirited is the mood that it is common to hear people say what would have been unthinkable in the years when the Soviet occupation was a synonym for brutality: that the "Russian time," as it is known, was not so bad after all, at least in Kabul.

"Ah, the Russian time — that was golden, compared to this," said a doctor at the Karte Seh Hospital, watching stretcher bearers carrying in the body of a 14-year-old boy

From the Editor:

Finally, a FORUM! As we enter our 24th year of doing this, we seem to be slowing down. That, plus the fact that there hasn't been much coverage of things Afghan in the local press - and what there has been has been distressingly repetitive - is why the chronology in this issue consists of 6 cartoons! But, it is followed by pages full of more information about Afghanistan than you can possibly want to know.

In 1996, we shall continue to bring you all the news & rumor we can find about Afghanistan & the Afghans from every possible source. This leads to our annual disclaimer: We do not vouch for the veracity of our articles; one person's fact may be another's propaganda so always consider the source. We take no political stand, we receive no funding (& no salaries - you couldn't pay us to do this); & subscriptions are our sole source of revenue.

Which leads us to note that most of your subscriptions expire with this issue. If a notice is enclosed, you owe us money. We hope you will want to continue to receive the FORUM, which will appear this year in February, May, August & November [we hope - the printer took 3 weeks to do the last issue]. We depend on you not only for subscriptions but for information, clippings, news items, etc. Without your support we won't exist. To everyone who sent us information for this issue, our heartfelt thanks. Deadline for the next issue is May 1. We'll hope to have some book reviews.

Nawroz greetings to our Afghan readers. Let's hope for a better year.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The ARTHUR PAUL COLLECTION BIBLIOGRAPHY: VOL.I: PASHTO AND DARI TITLES by Shaista Wahab. Dageforde Publishing, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1995. ISBN 1-886225-07-9. xii + 136 pp., photos, index. The bibliography contains over 800 Pashto & Dari titles on Afghanistan available at the University of Nebraska's Omaha campus library. To order, send \$20 per copy + \$3.50 shipping & handling (\$8 overseas) to Administrative Office, University Library, University of Nebraska @ Omaha, 60th & Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68182-0237. (Make checks payable to University Library.)

SETTING THE EAST ABLAZE, Lenin's Dream of an Empire in Asia by Peter Hopkirk, Kodansha Int'l., NY, London, Tokyo, 1995. ISBN 1-56836-102-5. 252 pp. Paper. \$14. This is a reprint of the hardcover edition published by Norton in 1985.

CENTRAL ASIA'S NEW STATES, Independence, Foreign Policy, & Regional Security by Martha Brill Olcott, US Institute of Peace Press, P.O. Box 605, Herndon, VA 22070, December 1995. 256 pp. \$19.95. Paper. In November the US Inst. of Peace published a Special Report on "The War in Tajikistan Three Years On," based on a forum held last June. Copies are available from the Institute at 1550 M St., NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20005-1708. (15 pp.)

FAIENCES d'AZUR, photographs by Roland & Sabrina Michaud & text by Michael Barry, Imprimerie Nationale, Paris, 1995 313 pp.

DAWAT, a monthly newspaper, is published by M. Tariq Bazger in Norway in Pashto & English. Subscriptions are \$45 per year from Dawat, P.O. Box 289, Lillestrom 2001, Norway. For Valentine's Day, here's an item from the November issue:

ځلک ویشتل په تمانچو کړي  
زه دې ویشتلې په څمارو سترگویمه

People are shooting with revolvers,  
You have been shooting at me with your languishing eyes.



whose brain had been blown out of his skull by a Taliban bombing raid.

Partly, the gloom is a product of the winter, one of the harshest in memory, with temperatures that sink to near zero at night, chilling mud-walled homes that still stand amid the rubble that is all that remains of at least half of Kabul. Scores of people go to hospitals each morning with frostbite.

Partly, it is the scarcity of food, made worse than ever this winter by a tightening of the siege by the Muslim guerrilla groups that control the roads leading to Kabul from Mazar-i Sharif in the north, Jalalabad in the east and Kandahar in the south.

These roads, lifelines that have never before been completely shut off for more than a few days, have been closed for much of the last month, creating a crisis as stocks of flour and cooking oil and other staples in United Nations warehouses dwindle.

On Saturday, the International Committee of the Red Cross began an emergency airlift from Peshawar in Pakistan, a 70-minute flight across the mountains to the east. With several shuttles a day, the Swiss-based relief agency plans to bring in more than 1,000 metric tons of wheat to Bagram, a former Soviet air base in a remote area 20 miles northeast of Kabul that is still under Government control.

The airlift planners hope to show the besieging guerrillas that they cannot starve out the city. But more than the privations of cold and hunger and gunfire, it is a sense of hopelessness that seems to gnaw at the 1.2 million people of this city.

"Afghanistan is no more," said Aysha, the mother-in-law of Hamid, the bicycle trader who took a bullet in the chest. "We have been abandoned by the world."

Aysha, who like many Afghans uses only one name, sobbed as she clutched the young man's hand. "The people who did this are no Muslims," she said. "They are the henchmen of Satan, and they will surely suffer in hell." Doctors said they will not expect Hamid to survive.

## Islam's Liberators

## Pledge of Peace Soon Vanishes

A year ago, when the Taliban forces first pushed to the gates of Kabul, many in the city saw them as potential liberators, despite stories of the militants' intolerance in Kandahar, where the movement was formed and has its headquarters, the first city they captured.

There, women were denied the right to work, ordered to wear full veils over their faces and punished if caught outside their homes with men

other than their fathers and brothers.

Word of these strictures appeared to have less of an impact on the people of Kabul than the Taliban's success in overwhelming several of the contending guerrilla groups left over from the Soviet occupation.

But the Taliban's promise that it



War between rival Muslim groups has turned much of Kabul to ruin.

would end the war and the battering of the civilian population, then step aside for a popularly elected government, evaporated quickly.

Soon, the militants were following the example of the guerrilla groups they supplanted, pounding Kabul with heavy artillery. In May, throngs in the capital celebrated when the forces of Ahmad Shah Massoud, the military commander who is the power behind the Government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani, struck the Taliban combatants with a lightning offensive and drove them back 30 miles from the capital.

But in September, the Taliban was back. After capturing the western city of Herat from Ismail Khan, an ally of Mr. Massoud, the militants drove back up the road to Kabul and threatened to overrun the city before Mr. Massoud's defenses stiffened.

Since then, the daily artillery barages have resumed, along with bombing attacks by the Taliban's embryonic air force. Thousands more have died, bringing the civilian toll in the capital since the Communist collapse in 1992 to at least 25,000, officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross say.

Government estimates put the death toll far higher, at least 45,000. But even at the lower figure, Kabul has suffered more in terms of sheer destruction and in the number killed, than Sarajevo, where 10,000 to 15,000 people are said to have died during the 40 months of Serbian bombardments that ended last fall.

And because there is only a vestigial international presence here — no United Nations military force of

the kind that attempted to mitigate the conflict in Bosnia, and only skeleton staffs at the United Nations and other international relief agencies that distribute food, medical supplies and other aid — the civilian population's distress seems more acute.

Last week, quieter than many since the fall, there were at least three attacks on bicyclists crossing the front lines in search of food, fuel and firewood, and a Taliban bombing attack in which two jets dropped four 1,000-pound bombs.

Two of the bombs exploded in a district of southern Kabul that was reduced to acres of rubble in bombardments that leveled much of the city from 1992 to 1995. Because much of the population still lives amid the rubble, the bombs fell in a busy street, killing at least 20 people and wounding many more. Hospital emergency rooms were awash with blood.

Government officials place blame for the carnage on Pakistan, which has backed the Taliban, apparently to win favor with two powerful Pakistani groups — Islamic militants, and Pakistan's own population of ethnic Pathans, who are indistinguishable from the Afghan Pathans who predominate in the Taliban force.

Pakistan's role has angered Iran, Russia and India, which have given concerted support in recent months to the Rabbani Government even though it is led and dominated by members of the ethnic Tajik minority that has held power in Afghanistan only once before in the last 250 years.

Each night, planes carrying arms, ammunition, spare parts and other supplies paid for by Teheran, Moscow and Delhi land at the Bagram air base, leaving telltale vapor trails in the starry skies over Kabul.

Almost as much opprobrium is directed at the United States, which poured more than \$5 billion of money and arms into the Muslim guerrilla struggle against the Soviet forces, then virtually disappeared as a factor in Afghan affairs after the cold war ended.

A relief effort by the United States Agency for International Development ended in 1994, and American aid channeled through the United Nations and other relief groups has fallen to between \$40 million and \$60 million a year, the United States Embassy in Pakistan estimates. American diplomacy has been limited to encouraging a United Nations mediation effort that has never come close to persuading the contending Muslim groups to end the fighting.

Many in Kabul share the view of President Rabbani's Foreign Minister, Najibullah Lafraie, who said in an interview that the United States

had a moral responsibility to re-engage in Afghanistan's affairs because of its role in the struggle against the Soviet occupation.

"We believed we were fighting for the freedom of the whole world, not just for the freedom of Afghanistan," said Mr. Lafraie, who was awarded a doctorate by the University of Hawaii in the 1980's. "We fought against the country that Ronald Reagan called the evil empire, and it was as a result of our sacrifices that the evil empire collapsed. But afterward we were forgotten."

## A Society Beyond Despair

But political arguments seem lost on the poorest people of Kabul, who move through their days with an air of hopelessness that seems to be beyond despair.

Stories abound of mothers abandoning their children in mosques because they lack food. Foreigners are approached at every stop by women beggars wearing the full-face netted

shrouds that are traditional among conservative Afghans. Packs of stray dogs howl in the streets at night as they move between street-corner garbage dumps.

To many people, the distinctions between the rival Muslim groups long ago lost significance, and the Rabbani Government has become virtually indistinguishable from its Communist predecessor.

Officials like Mr. Lafraie sit in the same offices, served by some of the same obsequious aides, and ride in the same curtained Mercedes-Benz sedans. Like the Communist Government, the Rabbani administration leaves most relief efforts to international organizations. When the Afghan currency loses half of its value in a matter of days, as it did when the roads were blocked in January, it is the ordinary people, not senior Government officials, who go hungry.

On the front lines, the war seems to have attained a purposeless momentum of its own. Young men,

some in their mid-teens, take the winter sunshine on battered steel chairs, adorned in a bizarre mixture of American and Soviet camouflage fatigues, as if to emphasize the irrelevance of the political distinctions that once fueled the fighting.

For them, life has been reduced to rounds of banditry, exacting tolls from those who return with their modest bounty from Taliban-held territory on bicycles and horsecarcasses. Sometimes the day's round turns to seemingly mindless violence.

When two 10-year-old scavengers traipsed past one roadblock near the front lines carrying sacks filled with farming implements, one young soldier overheard one of the boys saying he did not understand what the war was about, and saw nothing to choose from between the Rabbani Government and the Taliban.



The soldier took the boy by the ear, twisted it and extracted a vow of loyalty to Mr. Massoud. Then he adjusted his Soviet tank crewman's helmet and smiled.

"This war will never end," he said.

John Giannini for The New York Times

Food is scarce in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan.

A resident bargained the other day with a man, seated, who was selling turnips on the street.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

FEBRUARY 5, 1996



# From Cold War, Afghans Inherit Brutal New Age

By JOHN F. BURNS

HERAT, Afghanistan, Feb. 11 — When the crowds were summoned to the main stadium in Herat earlier this month, they went as Romans did to the Coliseum, to watch the grim ritual of death.

First, the crowd sat through a harangue by a Muslim cleric from the Taliban, the Islamic fundamentalist force that emerged from the chaos of civil war in Afghanistan to take control of more than half the country in the last 18 months.

Then Taliban officials turned their attention to an Afghan man who was said to have been convicted by a Taliban court of a triple murder. After his hands and feet were tied, and a noose put around his neck, he was hoisted slowly by a crane.

Afghans who saw the execution said the man died slowly, jerking spasmodically before finally going limp.

From the crowd, there were shouts of "Allah be praised!" Outside the stadium, slumped against a wall and wailing, were several women, relatives of the condemned man, covered head to foot in the manner the Taliban prescribes.

The new Afghanistan is a world where murderers and "enemies" of the Taliban are hanged from cranes and the barrels of tank cannon, where the execution of others found guilty of killing consists of being shot in the back with rifles by their victims' fathers, and where convicted thieves are subjected to surgical amputations of their hands and arms.

After the anarchy of recent years, many Afghans have welcomed the harsh punishments meted out by the Taliban to some violent criminals.

According to reports published recently in Pakistan, there was an execution

carried out in the eastern Afghanistan city of Khost few days ago.

A large crowd that had gathered on the grounds of a local hotel cheered when a retired Pakistani soldier named Faizullah Khattak fired a burst from a Kalashnikov rifle into the back of an Afghan named Mohammed Ullah who was convicted by an Islamic court of killing Mr. Khattak's son, a taxi driver who had crossed into Afghanistan with a passenger last year.

In another execution, the condemned man, an Afghan in his early 20's, was said to have begged forgiveness for killing his cousin, only to be cut down by two bursts of automatic rifle fire by his uncle.

Not since 1979, when Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini led an Islamic revolution in Iran, which borders on Afghanistan only 75 miles

## Enforcers in the Name of Allah

Out of the anarchy that followed the Soviet retreat from Afghanistan in 1989 emerged numerous competing factions, many of them still fighting with weapons that had been supplied covertly by the United States. Divided by tribal origins, personalities or strictness of their interpretations of Islam, the factions have battled for control ever since.

A new and stringently fundamentalist faction, the Taliban, arose in September 1994, in protest against the abduction and rape of a group of Afghan women and teenage girls by local warlords who had gained power in the fight against the Soviets.

Invoking the memory of forebears who fought the British, the Taliban pledged to rid Afghanistan of the warlords, whom they described as "parasites" masquerading as Muslims.

Within four months, they controlled a third of Afghanistan. Since then, their fortunes have varied. Herat, the principal city in western Afghanistan, fell in September 1995. But Taliban troops besieging Kabul, the capital, have failed to dislodge the Government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani, a Muslim cleric.

The fighters of Taliban — the word is Arabic for students of Muslim religious schools — include former guerrillas fighting the former Soviet-backed Government, veterans of the Afghan



Communist forces and military novices recruited from school in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Arms and money have come mostly from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Their leader is Mohammed Umar, 35, who grew up in a poor village and then spent years fighting the Russians. "We are fighting against Muslims who have gone wrong," he told a Pakistani newspaper.

west of here, has this region been wrenched so abruptly toward the past. Nor, since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the same year, has there been anything to match the Taliban's potential threat of completing a 2,000-mile chain of animosity toward the West — through Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan.

The other macabre twist is that in Afghanistan this hostile force is a mutation of American cold war politics. For the Taliban emerged from the chaos of a war between American proxy warriors and Soviet troops, and is still supported by the arms network of American allies created to challenge Soviet power.

Only a year ago, the rise of the Taliban was greeted with widespread enthusiasm in areas of the country that they now control. Their sudden emergence as a political and military force, from a base in the southern city of Kandahar, was propelled by their pledge to "cleanse" Afghanistan of the killing, rape and pillage that became endemic under the cover of the civil war that ensued after Soviet troops were withdrawn in 1989.

But instead of the relief they promised, the Taliban have plunged millions of Afghans into a new chapter of brutality that echoes the harshness of Afghanistan's distant past.

It is a world where there has been a systematic drive to push women back into

purdah, the traditional Muslim arrangement that prevents them from seeing any men outside their immediate families. In Herat, like other places the Taliban rule, this practice has meant a loss of rights most Afghan women had enjoyed for decades.

## Education and Work Are Denied to Women

Under Taliban decrees, women have been forbidden to work outside their homes, except in hospitals and clinics, and then only if they work exclusively with women and girls. Girls have been expelled from schools and colleges, and told that, for now at least, education is for boys only. Girls who were only months from finishing high school, or young women graduating from college, have been told their career dreams are over.

Women wishing to go shopping in the bazaars, or to move anywhere outside their homes, must be accompanied by male kinfolk and wear the traditional burqa, a head-to-toe shroud with a netted slot over the eyes.

The regime imposed by the Taliban, across a 600-mile stretch of territory from Herat in the west to the Pakistan border in the east, is one of such hostility to "modern" influences that the secretive Muslim clerics who lead the movement have ordered public "hangings" of television sets, video-cassette players and stereo systems. In Herat, Taliban fighters have gone from house to house pulling down satellite dishes and antennas, and confiscating books judged to be tainted by Western influence.

As in the Iran of the ayatollahs, the Taliban's rule joins a harsh interpretation of the Muslim holy book, the Koran, with modern forms of enforcement. Herat bristles with Taliban "warriors" in long-tailed turbans carrying Kalashnikov rifles. Some watch suspiciously from rooftops, while others thunder through the narrow, crowded streets of the bazaars in Japanese pickup trucks that were bought for them by sympathetic Arab countries, Saudi Arabia among them.

Along with their puritanical beliefs, the Taliban, since winning control of Herat in September, have loosed a wave of banditry. In the privacy of their mud-walled courtyards, Herat's frightened townsfolk tell of Taliban men bursting in at night, stealing money and gold and cars, and press-gang men, some as young as 15, for service in Taliban ranks. So far, the townsfolk say, there has been no known case of the Taliban punishing any intruder.

"For 18 years, we lived in hope that things would get better," said an elderly Afghan scholar, one of a minority of professional people who did not flee Herat in the exodus that followed the Soviet invasion.

In a home redolent of a richer past — a glassed-in orangery looking onto a garden flanked by apricot trees — the scholar added: "We are ruled now by men who offer us nothing but the Koran, even though many of them cannot read; who call themselves

Muslims, and know nothing of the true greatness of our faith. There are no words for such people. We are in despair."

## After 2 Decades of War, There Is Little Left to Lose

For some Afghans, the Taliban represent the end-product of a war that has worn away what little progress this intensely conservative country made before a Communist coup in 1978 led to the Soviet intervention, a decade of guerrilla conflict, and now, seven years after the Soviet forces left, a seemingly endless civil war. With its cities, towns and villages in rubble, and little left to destroy, these Afghans say, the country has finally reached, in the ascendancy of the Taliban, something close to a primal state.

Apart from their social and religious rigors, the Taliban, who mainly belong to the ethnic Pashtun group that accounts for nearly half the population of Afghanistan, are obtrusive outsiders in Herat. By their customs and by their language, Pashto, as well as by their appearance, they are set apart from the majority in Herat, where the population of 200,000 is mostly drawn from the ethnic Tajik minority, with its own language, Dari, which is a dialect of Persian.

The differences are deeply resented in Herat, a city that was once a major center for the arts and learning, with close ties to the Persian dynasties that were a fountainhead of culture and military skill. In the disdain many people in Herat show for the Taliban there is an element of the superiority people here have always felt towards those outside the Persian cultural tradition, particularly Pashto-speakers from Kandahar. In the bazaars of Herat, Taliban are frequently referred to as "donkey boys," a term commonly used to describe people who are considered crude and uncivilized.

But long before the Taliban seized control here, ethnic and linguistic strains had been sharpened by the war. For 250 years, since Afghanistan came together as a nation, Afghans have had a fierce sense of national pride that has overridden regional attachments. But since the war against the Soviet forces began in 1979, empowering local warlords who made strongholds of every plain and valley, the country has disintegrated into a mosaic of ethnic fiefs.

An Uzbek group, led by Abdul-Rashid Doestam a former leader of a Communist militia, controls much of the north around Mazar-i-Sharif. A predominantly Tajik group led by Ahmad Shah Massoud, a former Muslim guerrilla leader, controls the northeast and the capital, Kabul. A group of ethnic Hazaras, Shiite Muslims with strong links to Iran, dominate in the mountains northwest of Kabul. Ethnic Pashtun groups prevail almost everywhere else.

Of the Pashtun groups, the most powerful is the Taliban. Virtually unknown until September 1994, they gained power first in Kandahar, historically a center of Islamic conservatism. The name Taliban was taken from the Arabic word for students, a refer-

ence to the fact that the core group of Taliban came together at Muslim religious schools known as madrassahs in Kandahar and, before that, during the Soviet occupation, at similar institutions across the border in Pakistan.

## New Guerrilla Group Met Little Resistance

Reinforced by defectors from the Communist Government's armed forces, and backed by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan — American allies — the Taliban thrived on popular disillusionment with the war. After Kandahar, they drove rapidly east and west, meeting little resistance. Mostly, rival armed groups either handed over their weapons, or joined the Taliban. Within six months of taking Kandahar, the Taliban were at the gates of Kabul. Within a year, they had taken Herat.

The drive on Kabul went into reverse when it met with a stiff rebuff from Mr. Massoud. But since September, Taliban forces have once again threatened the capital, maintaining a tight siege in a loose alliance with General Doestam, whose forces are pressing on Kabul from the north. To the east of the capital a Muslim guerrilla group led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a Pashtun leader who was a favored recipient of American money and arms during the war against the Russians, has recovered from his own defeat by the Taliban a year ago to participate in the siege.

Mr. Massoud has predicted a major Taliban offensive, probably about Feb. 20, after the Muslim holy month of Ramadan ends, and has implied that he is planning his own pre-emptive strike against the fundamentalists. Many in Afghanistan say that the outcome of the next round of fighting between the two groups could be the decisive event in the civil war.

If the Taliban take the capital — unlikely, but not impossible, in the view of Western diplomats in Islamabad — the prospect would be for a Taliban Government much like the administrations they have installed in 12 of Afghanistan's 31 provinces. In Kandahar, Herat and other places they have taken power, the Taliban rule through a shura, or council, composed of Muslim clerics known as mullahs. Decisions are reached in secret, and announced as decrees. Resistance is punishable by death.

For the moment, Taliban leaders in Herat appear keen to accentuate their reasonableness, at least to outsiders. A Western reporter who spent five days here, and an accompanying photographer, moved freely about the city and took photographs at will, something said to be almost impossible for foreigners in Kandahar. "We see no country in the world as our enemy, even if they want to consider us as their enemies," said Nour Mohammed Akhund, a 32-year-old mullah who is the third-ranking Taliban leader in Herat.

One reason for the less stringent attitude toward Westerners in Herat could be the growing hostility toward the Taliban in Iran,



which has joined India and Russia in an airlift of arms, ammunition and other supplies to the Massoud forces in Kabul. The Taliban's brand of militant Islam, despite its superficial similarities with Iran, has done nothing to alleviate estrangements that grow from the 1,300-year-old schism in the Muslim world between Shiites, the majority in Iran, and Sunnis, who make up the overwhelming majority of the Afghan population.

## Links to U.S. Allies Raise Suspicion in Iran

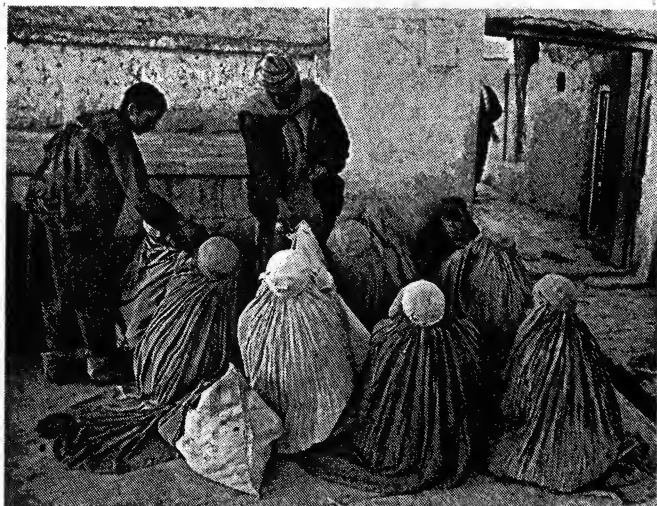
But politics, more than religion, appear to underpin the Taliban's distrust of Iran. From the outset, the Taliban have been strongly backed by Pakistan, a fact that has prompted Iranian religious leaders to denounce the Taliban as part of an American plot to encircle Iran. Recent military preparations by the Taliban suggest that Taliban leaders fear an attempt by the Kabul Government, with Iran's backing, to try to recapture Herat. The Massoud ally who ruled here until September, Ismail Khan, who fled to the eastern Iranian city of Meshed with thousands of supporters, is said to have regained control of several strategic towns south and west of Herat, perhaps in preparation for a possible strike against Herat.

That the Taliban have reason to fear challenges seems clear. Herat residents, anxious to demonstrate the city's capacity to resist outsiders, take visitors on a journey into hills north of the city, where a shrine has been built at the site of one of the worst atrocities of the war against the Soviet occupation.

On a saddle in the hills overlooking Herat, glass canopies have been erected over pits where Afghan Communists massacred hundreds of Herat residents after an anti-Communist uprising in September 1979.

In local lore, the uprising has joined the challenges Herat offered to past conquerors, including Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. But if Taliban fighters visiting the shrine absorbed the message, they did not show it. As they peered into the pits where the victims were buried, taking in the bullet-fractured skulls and bones, the rotting clothing and shoes, and the scattered Afghan currency, they seemed unimpressed. "So? They died," one Taliban warrior said.

Some of the Taliban troops seemed to be as much victims of the situation as perpetrators. In a wrecked school that was rebuilt last year by the United Nations, a group of Taliban warriors huddled together in the cold, the bare concrete floor around them littered with vegetable peels. Among the men, all in their early 20's, there was not one who had ever been to school. "I've been fighter ever since I started to grow beard," said Sher Ali, aged 20. "Since 14, I have been fighting. It's all I have ever known."



Photographs by John Giannini for The New York Times

## A Repressive Vision Of a Holy Future

Although he has never read the Koran, Mr. Ali said he believed that the Taliban, by following its teachings, would be the salvation of Afghanistan. "Everything we do will be according to the Holy Koran," he said. "No negative actions will be allowed. Whatever Allah has commanded, as far as possible, we will do." As for those who defied the Koran, Mr. Ali said, tracing a finger first across his neck, then across his forearm, "We will cut!"

A short distance away, another group, this time of women and babies, sat shivering in another bare concrete room, the malnutrition ward of the main Herat hospital. In a city where one in every five babies dies before reaching its first birthday, professional care in the ward relied until recently on a French doctor assigned to Herat by a Paris-based medical charity, Médecins du Monde. But in January, the doctor, after a shoving match with armed Taliban, was ordered to leave the ward under Taliban strictures on the separation of men and women.

The doctor has kept busy working among refugees in a tented camp on the city's outskirts. But the memory of his banishment ranks the Afghan women staff members, many of them barely trained, who are left to cope with the patients. One woman, with a small baby had her own concise opinion on the Taliban.

"I'd like to kill them," she said.

NYT 2/14

Above, women forbidden to work beg outside a Herat cemetery.

## Regal Afghan

By FRANK LITSKY

Just like a diva, she had a hairdresser hovering over her before she met her public. For 45 minutes, he brushed, sprayed a mixture of water and conditioner, brushed, combed and brushed again. • • •

She is Ch. Tryst of Grandeur, a 5-year-old, 50-pound black Afghan hound. When she won the Afghan breed judging yesterday afternoon, she reaffirmed her position as a favorite to win the best-of-show trophy at night in the Westminster Kennel Club show in Madison Square Garden. • • •

Tryst, the Afghan, is unusual in many ways. Start with her name. Few dogs would recognize their formal names. (Can you just hear an Uzbek hound responding to "Come here, Ch. Xanadu Cinodra Shakespeare!") But Tryst is known simply as Tryst, and she is the height of femininity. Listen to Michael Canallizo of Freeport, L.I., her handler/caretaker/hairdresser: "She's everything a feminine Afghan should be. She's graceful and elegant, like a beautiful woman. That little glint in her eye lets you know she can be just as naughty as she wants to be." • • •

[She didn't win.] NYT 2/14

# Afghanistan's War – Forgotten But Still Producing Side-Effects

By Richard C. Hottelet

**S**EVEN years ago, the Soviet invaders withdrew from Afghanistan; but the war never stopped. The *mujahideen*, the Islamic guerrillas who had defeated the Red Army, continued to fight against President Najibullah, the Kremlin's man. Even before he was overthrown, in 1992, they turned upon each other.

The flood of weapons to the guerrilla factions from outside hardly ebbed, although the United States ended its support Jan. 1, 1992. One new factor, the Taliban militia, emerged last year to seize a major role in the bloody struggle for power and especially for control of the symbolic ruin that is Kabul, the capital. Some 25,000 people have died in almost incessant rocketing, shelling, and bombing of the city since 1992. The population's lot remains death and devastation in yet another harsh and early winter.

Only one thing has clearly changed. The world, so long fascinated by the Afghan drama, has lost interest.

Today's struggle is a mix of coldblooded tactics and the surreal. Early last August, an Ilyushin-76 transport plane was forced to land in the city of Kandahar. It was a charter flight with a Russian crew, from the republic of Tatarstan in the Russian Federation, loaded with Albanian AK-47 assault rifles for the fighters of President Burhanuddin Rabbani in Kabul. It was forced down by the Taliban, who continue to hold the crew despite appeals from Russia, the United Nations General Assembly, and the UN Security Council.

Russia reportedly gives Mr. Rabbani massive help in a covert operation that has been run by Yevgeny Primakov, director of Russia's foreign intelligence service. Long known as a Middle East expert, Mr. Primakov is President Boris Yeltsin's nominee as foreign minister and is reputed to be a more ardent exponent of Russian interests than his predecessor, Andrei Kozirev. These interests, the motor of Soviet intervention in 1979, continue to involve Afghanistan. Turmoil there has spilled over into the Central Asian republic of Tajikistan, where Russia has stationed more than one division of troops, worried that Islamic radicalism may spread to all of former-Soviet Central Asia.

## Muslim groups and regional strategies

Iran and India also support the Rabbani government. Iran, with close ties to the large minority of Shiite Muslims in western Afghanistan, fears for them and for its own influence if the fanatic Sunni come out on top. India's strategic calculus is based on Kashmir, its northernmost province. The rebellion of Kashmir's Muslim majority has poisoned India's relations with Pakistan from the beginning.

During the Afghan war against the Soviet invasion, Pakistan was the supply line to the *mujahideen*. Even retrospect staggers the imagination. The United States sent the *mujahideen* an estimated \$5 billion in arms, ammunition, and supplies. For Washington, it was the last

great confrontation of the cold war.

Saudi Arabia roughly matched the American contribution; but the Saudis, including wealthy princes and private donors, were primarily interested in the *mujahideen* as Islamic fighters.

Pakistan wanted a closely allied Islamic state to eliminate Soviet influence. It is now accused of bankrolling the Taliban not only with an eye on the Russians but also to dominate the trade routes to Central Asia – and to keep India from undercutting Pakistan in their unending struggle over Kashmir.

## The role of the Taliban

Who are the Taliban? The name means "student" or "searcher for the truth." Their leaders are said to have come from religious schools in the great Afghan refugee camps inside Pakistan. Like the old factions, they profess to want an Islamic state, but one cleansed of what they call the present criminal leadership. The Taliban are ultraconservative, relegating women to the dark ages and advocating the gruesome traditional punishments of flogging, stoning, and amputation. This has set the tone not only for uncompromising conflict but also for the further fragmentation and brutalization of society.

The Taliban have given no idea of what they mean by Islamic government and refuse to join in the UN's effort to find a political way to peace. They insist on a military decision.

Yet, in the chaos that reigns in Afghanistan, the Taliban could point the way to a solution. The group is split between the primitive Islamists and those with royalist leanings. Their center, Kandahar, was the seat of Pushtun kings (Pushtun is one of the two main ethnic

linguistic groups in Afghanistan).

Zahir Shah, the former monarch who was deposed in 1973, has been urged to return to his country as a transitional, national catalyst. He has been in Rome since he was overthrown and, now 81, shows little interest in the idea.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan jogs the memory of a world that would rather forget it. It has become the second-largest producer of opium, increasingly exported as heroin to the West via Russia.

Some 400 American Stinger hand-held antiaircraft missiles are thought to have gone to the *mujahideen*. They were not all used in the war. The "Afghanis," non-Afghan Arabs in the main, who learned the roughest guerrilla trades there, are journeymen terrorists in the Arab world and beyond.

Those who can stifle their feelings about the human misery and the millions of unexploded land mines may still see reasons – in the opium, the "Afghanis," the missing stingers, and the strategic dangers of this political tornado in the heart of Asia – to do whatever they can to bring peace to Afghanistan.

■ Richard C. Hottelet, a longtime foreign correspondent for CBS, writes on world affairs.



January 24, 1996

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

# Taliban's fate in the limbo

ISLAMABAD — Bad news for Pakistan and Saudi Arabia—if the allegation that the two countries are the main external hands for Taliban is accepted. Taliban are fast losing their battle against the forces of military strongman Ahmad Shah Masood and the Burhanuddin Rabbani administration of Kabul.

Despite heavy rocket exchange between the warring parties, which continued till late Tuesday night, Taliban seemed to be constantly on the retreat. Even they had to flee from the southern strategic Rishkor Military Garrison, which was one of the major military gains they had made soon after the start of the current assault on the Kabul establishment some over two months ago.

Till last week, they were in control of most of Pul-i-Charkhi area in the south-east of the city, some 13 kilometres from the city, from where they could advance and control the Kabul-Jalalabad road, the main supply route for Kabul. In addition, as Western observers also pointed out, the Taliban victory over Pul-i-Charkhi meant that they could get an access to Bagram Airport, which, located some 60 km from Kabul, provides its administration the only operational airbase.

What does all this mean? That, with General Rashid Dostum being a silent operator, Ahmad Shah Masood remains Afghanistan's leading military figure. Exact estimates of his weapons strength, or their sources of origin, may be a matter of speculation, what is unquestionable is his war tactics. Leading a force that is not as ill-organised as Taliban are, he seems to know where to concentrate his force, where to commit it, and where to launch a surprise attack.

Last week, the Masood forces launched a massive attack against Taliban in the city's south-eastern combat theatre, pushing them some 20 km back, capturing not just the Pul-i-Charkhi areas but further south-eastern towns of Chakri and Band-e-Ghazi as well. Taliban fled to areas of their Logar province, some 32 km from Kabul. Then, apparently, he got the information well in advance that Taliban, after being defeated in the south-east, were now concentrating in the southern Rishkor hills.

Now, before, Taliban could pose any credible threat to his forces, his latest military push has forced them to

flee even Rishkore. Now the only strategic area in the south, which is still in Taliban control, is Khairabad Hills. But these hills have been in Taliban control since September. So,

it will not be a big deal for Masood to wipe out his enemy from this area the moment he thinks that it is becoming potentially dangerous for him.

Politically as well, not just Taliban but also their alleged foreign supporters appear to be on the receiving end primarily because of the two factors: the Iranian and the United Nations.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Alaaddin Broujerdi is currently in Afghanistan, reportedly engaged in hectic diplomacy to strengthen the hands of the Rabbani administration against Taliban. It is the third time this year that Mr Broujerdi has come to Afghanistan. He has met Rashid Dostum, whom, according to security agency sources here, he had tried to convince last September not to side with Taliban and instead, join Rabbani and fight against Taliban in Herat. The Iranian DFM assured General Dostum that, in case of his victory over Taliban, Iran would not object to his rule in Herat.

Taliban have more than once accused that one of the reasons for Mr Broujerdi's frequent visits to Afghanistan is that Iran wants to set up a military base in the predominantly Shiite Bamyan province, which the forces of anti-Iran Hizb-e-Wahdat forces had captured from the Rabbani administration forces last month. Now, as per reports, the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister has also met Karim Khalili, the commander of that faction of Hizb-e-Wahdat which has so far not cooperated with the Iranian regime. It is commander Akbari's Hizb-e-Wahdat that is in alliance with Mr Rabbani. This Shiite faction toes the line of Iran, but is not considered militarily strong.

Some Afghan nationals living here as refugees term Khalili's Hizb as one of the three anti-Rabbani factions which have the potential to challenge Ahmad Shah Masood's forces. However, their opinion about Taliban is that they are "some sort of a farce." It is not yet clear whether or not the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister has succeeded in making any deal with Commander Khalili. But if he has, this should be a cause for a serious concern for any external actor(s), which have been banking upon

Taliban since their rise in Afghanistan in October last year.

The moment Taliban had made the most credibly advance two weeks ago, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan had jointly come out with a three-point peace agenda for Afghanistan. Both might have made this move in anticipation of an eventual victory of Taliban over the Rabbani administration. Taliban had already rejected the United Nations

latest plan, presented last month by UN's Afghanistan envoy Mahmoud Mestiri and proposing to set up a 28-member Council government in Kabul, after Mr Rabbani quits his office.

For Taliban and their alleged external supporters, the apparently tragic development right now is that even General Dostum seems to be willing to be in favour of the UN plan, which already has the full-fledged support of the Rabbani administration. On Tuesday, reportedly, he presented some ten names to the UN officials in Kabul to be included in the Council which Mr Mestiri's latest peace formula proposes to set up. Previously, the Supreme Coordination Council, of which Dostum—besides Taliban, Khalili, and Hizb-e-Islami's Gulbadin Hekmatyar—is a member, had expressed serious reservations about Mestiri's plan.

If the notion that Pakistan is banking on Taliban is accepted, the latest military and political developments with regard to Afghanistan seem to go against its national interests. Ravan Farhadi, Afghanistan's UN ambassador, has once again accused Pakistan of involvement in the affairs of his country. For this, he has cited the latest air-strikes and rocket attacks by Taliban on Kabul, which have killed and injured several civilians. **NATION** 12/7

## TASHKENT STOPS SENDING FUEL TO DOSTUM

Uzbekistan has cut the flow of electricity and fuel oil to Dostum. Reports from Mazar say the price of fuel oil has skyrocketed as a result of the embargo imposed by Uzbekistan. The reason for the decision of Uzbekistan to cut the flow of fuel and electricity to Dostum is not clear but it is speculated that Tashkent is not happy with the close relation between the ex-communist warlord General Dostum and the Taliban.

AFGHANNEWS VOL. 11, #11, October

# Mujaddedi resigns

Sibghatullah Mujaddedi has resigned from the four-party alliance formed two years ago to topple President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government, his spokesman said on November 29.

Mujaddedi, who served as president of the Supreme Coordination Council of Islamic Revolution in Afghanistan (SCCIRA) has decided to step down for "political reasons," the spokesman, Musa Ghazi, told AFP.

He refused to elaborate, pending the return of Mujaddedi who is in Denmark. Mujaddedi's decision came after reports that his alliance colleagues had held secret contacts with the Kabul government without informing him.

The SCCIRA, grouping Hezb Islami of former Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, the National Islamic Movement of ex-communist general Abdul Rashid Dostum and a faction of Shiite Hezb Wahdat, formerly led by Abdul Ali Mazari, was formed more than two years ago as an anti-Rabbani alliance.

It is said Mujaddedi also had complaints that SCCIRA's two key components, Hezb Islami and the National Islamic Movement, had not consulted him while taking some important political and military decisions.

Mujaddedi, who served as first president of post-communist Afghanistan in 1992, is respected among Afghan people as a moderate religious leader.

AFGHANews Vol:11, No 12.

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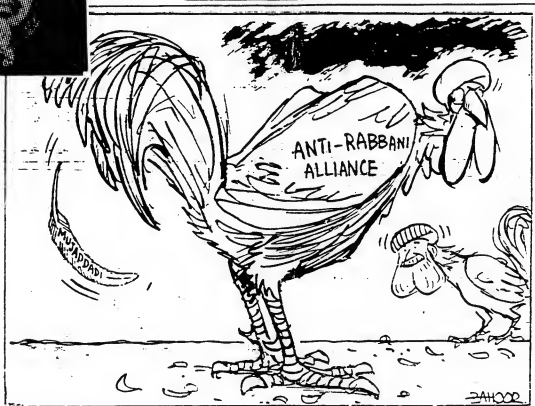
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جمعه Friday	پنجشنبه Thursday	پهارشنبه Wednesday	سه شنبه Tuesday	دوشنبه Monday	یکشنبه Sunday	شنبه Saturday
23 ۴	22 Washington's Birth Day ۳	21 ۲ عید فطر	20 ۱ روزگار			
1 March ۵۵	29 Leap Year Day ۱۰	28 ۹ ۱۰	27 ۸ ۱۰	26 ۷ ۱۰	25 ۶ ۱۰	24 ۵ ۱۰
8 ۱۸ ۱۸	7 ۱۷ ۱۷	6 ۱۶ ۱۶	5 ۱۵ ۱۵	4 ۱۴ ۱۴	3 ۱۳ ۱۳	2 ۱۲ ۱۲
15 ۲۵ ۲۵	14 ۲۴ ۲۴	13 ۲۳ ۲۳	12 ۲۲ ۲۲	11 ۲۱ ۲۱	10 ۲۰ ۲۰	9 ۱۹ ۱۹
		20 ۳۰ ۳۰	19 ۲۹ ۲۹	18 ۲۸ ۲۸	17 ۲۷ ۲۷	16 ۲۶ ۲۶



Sibghatullah  
Mujaddedi

Wednesday, November 25, 1995



Frontier Post

Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) distributed food stuffs with a value of US\$ 31,000 among those affected by the recent landslide and drought in Badakhshan Province. Almost 9000 families were assisted by the 90 tonnes provided. KRCS also donated a further US\$ 10,000 for a water supply scheme being executed by WHO in Faizabad, Badakhshan.

ACBAR News Summary November

# OPINION

December 19, 1995

Dear Friends,

I am enclosing some FBIS Reports from the Central Asia series for you to use as news sources in your next issue of Afghanistan Forum. These reports add a whole new dimension to the situation in Afghanistan, and, I believe Pakistani support for the Taliban is explained by Pakistani eagerness to get its share of Turkmenistan's resources.

Turkmenistan holds some of the world's largest gas & oil supplies. Until now, pipelines have funnelled the gas & oil into the former Soviet Union countries. By developing pipelines in other directions (west to Europe, south to South Asia & the sea, & east to China & Japan), Turkmenistan can shift its economic focus to other parts of the globe. Turkmenistan will also be able to display a more independent position in the continual maneuverings between Russia & its former Central Asian colonies. The FBIS Central Asia Reports reveal the difficulty that the newly independent countries have in attempting to free themselves of their old ties to Russia. The ties involve currency, gold reserves, military garrisons, transportation & communication networks, power grids, as well as pipelines & other trading patterns. Russia is engaged in trying to strengthen the old ties, while other countries are attempting both to draw Central Asia away from its old colonizer & to establish their own access to Central Asia's resources. The Great Game goes on. Turkmenistan has been negotiating with the Japanese over a pipeline through China to Japan; with countries to the west over a pipeline through Iran & Turkey to Europe; and now an agreement has been made to build a pipeline through Afghanistan to Pakistan & perhaps India. Notably lacking is any Afghan participation in the arrangements.

Two days after the fall of Herat to the Taliban forces - or to the joint Taliban/Pakistani forces, according to the Kabul gov't - Pres. Leghari of Pakistan made an official visit to Turkmenistan to discuss the pipeline to Pakistan. In a formal speech, Leghari referred to substantial progress that had been made toward the implementation of the plans. Was the substantial progress the Taliban's recent victories in western Afghanistan which secured control over the entire area that the proposed pipeline would pass through? Leghari & Turkmenistan's Pres. Niyazof also discussed running a power grid from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan (which has a shortage of energy resources). By October 30, a joint US/Saudi Arabian oil venture (Unocal & Delta Oil) were formally granted the rights to construct a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan, and to purchase & transport the gas. A protocol of intention was also signed regarding an oil pipeline along the same route.

Given the lack of formal Afghan involvement in these arrangements, the confidence of the negotiating parties in the chosen route, & the timing of the agreements in being confirmed immediately after the Taliban's final victory in its drive for control over the Afghan territory designated as the future energy route, it seems reasonable to suspect that the Taliban have allowed themselves to be used as pawns by foreign gov'ts & oil companies. It also seems reasonable to suspect that the lack of int'l protest over foreign interference in the Afghan civil war is the result of int'l investment & development plans rather than int'l lack of concern.

I hope you find the enclosed documents to be helpful for your next issue. Thank you for your time & effort in publishing the Forum. I look forward to reading each issue.

Sandy Lillydahl  
Amherst, MA

[Excerpts from the Foreign Broadcast Information Service Reports follow:]

**Pakistani President Arrives on Official Visit**

LD0609140495 Moscow *ITAR-TASS World Service*  
in Russian 1216 GMT 6 Sep 95

[By *ITAR-TASS* correspondent Anna Kurbanova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ashgabat, 6 Sep — The president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan [Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari] arrived in Turkmenistan today on an official visit. He was met at the capital's airport by President Saparmurad Niyazov. In accordance with the program of the visit, which is to continue until 8 September, the first round of interstate talks will be held this evening. The talks will center on the joint project for building a gas pipeline to Pakistan. • • •

FBIS-SOV-95-174  
8 September 1995

**Power Supply Projects Discussed**

LD0709202695 Moscow *ITAR-TASS in English*  
1931 GMT 7 Sep 95

[By Oleg Lukin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ashgabat, September 7 (*ITAR-TASS*) — Pakistani President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, who is on an official visit to Turkmenistan, familiarized himself with versions of projects of power supply to Pakistan across Afghanistan, as well as the creation of a grid of joint electricity supply systems with a number of central Asian countries during his visit to the Mary hydro-electric Power station today. He went on a tour of the Mary and Tashauz regions of the country, which are noted for their dynamic industrial development. • • •

FBIS-SOV-95-200  
17 October 1995

**Niyazov Discusses Gas Issues With Foreign Companies**

LD1610170795 Ashgabat *Radio Ashgabat Network*  
in Russian 1300 GMT 16 Oct 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Our head of state [Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov] received Jimmy Ails, the leader of the American oil and gas company Unocal [Union Oil Co. of California], and Babra al-Alman, the head of the Delta company, at his country residence yesterday [15 October].

Aspects of the construction of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan gas pipeline, the capacity of which will be 20 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually, were discussed during the course of the meeting. The heads of the companies, having noted the importance of this international project, informed the Turkmen president that Unocal and Delta are aiming at long-term cooperation both in the development of gas deposits and in [word indistinct] of natural gas.

Businessmen from various countries of the world are showing interest in the project for a gas pipeline leading to Pakistan. Its implementation — according to the preliminary estimates of experts of the Unocal company — will need \$10-\$12 billion.

Saparmurad Turkmenbashi informed the heads of the companies that the construction of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan gas pipeline will be considered during his visit to the United States.

FBIS-SOV-95-210  
31 October 1995

**U.S. Company To Ship Turkmen Natural Gas to Pakistan**

LD3010162495 Moscow *ITAR-TASS World Service*  
in Russian 1449 GMT 30 Oct 95

[By *ITAR-TASS* correspondent Anna Kurbatova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ashgabat, 30 Oct — The U.S. company Unocal and its traditional eastern partner, Delta Oil company from Saudi Arabia, have been granted the right to purchase Turkmen gas on the Turkmen-Afghan border and ship it to Pakistan. An agreement on this has recently been reached with a Turkmen government delegation in New York during the UN anniversary session, this was said in the Turkmen capital today by Unocal's president John Imle, prior to his departure for Islamabad.

Turkmenistan guarantees sales of 25 trillion of cubic feet [700bn cubic meters] of gas from the fields which are located in the southeast of the country, the U.S. businessman stressed. In their turn, Unocal and Delta Oil companies intend to organize daily shipments of up to 2 billion cubic meters of gas to Pakistan. The construction of the 1,300 km long gas pipeline across the Afghan territory will bring peace to this country and the region, the Unocal president says.

A protocol of intention on the construction of an oil pipeline along the same route has also been signed in New York, J. Imle stressed. It will be possible to ship not only Turkmen oil but also oil from the Central Asian part of the CIS and Russia's Siberian oil to the terminals in the Indian Ocean.

The Unocal's president said that the future gas pipeline would cost about \$3 billion and the pipeline would cost \$5 billion. These are long-term projects and the implementation of them will depend to a large extent on the implementation of political accords between the three states, who are equally interested in establishing stability in this region.

# Plundered Afghan Treasures

When rockets slammed into the National Museum of Afghanistan in Kabul in May, 1993, a fire melted beams supporting the ornate vaulted roof, sending it crashing down on the upper galleries. The next day, Najibulla Popol, the museum curator, pedaled his bicycle through the fighting to the shattered building. He and a few staff members transferred what they could salvage to the vaults in the museum's basement.

Thereafter, however, the museum and its collection—the sole comprehensive record of Central Asian history—were on the front line of the vicious struggle between *mujahedin* factions for control of the capital. Within months, the main museum building was gutted, and weeds were sprouting in the rubble-strewn upper galleries. In the months following the first rocket attack, a stream of *mujahedin* soldiers repeatedly breached the steel doors of the vaults and systematically looted their contents, often guided by detailed instructions from Afghan and Pakistani antiquities dealers.

Soldiers stole all the most precious objects, Popol says. Less-important artifacts were left smashed on the floor, while those too heavy to carry, such as life-sized statues of Kushan warriors from 200 B.C. and large Buddhas, were badly damaged. According to Sayed Eshaq Deljo Husseini, Afghan minister of information and culture, 90 percent of the museum's collection has been looted. "It was one of the richest museums in the entire region, covering 50,000 years of history in Afghanistan and Central Asia," Husseini laments.

Interviews in Pakistan and Afghanistan with Western experts and diplomats, Pakistani intelligence and customs officials, *mujahedin* warlords, and smugglers revealed a trail of looted artifacts stretching from middlemen and antiques dealers in Kabul, Peshawar, and Islamabad to private art collectors in Tokyo, Islamabad, Jidda, Kuwait, London, and Geneva. "The trade in Afghan antiquities has become the biggest money earner after the heroin trade, and it is often the same mafias who are doing both," says a senior Western diplomat who is involved in tracking down some of the lost pieces.

In Peshawar, two 2,500-year-old heads of the Hindu god Shiva that were once

on display in the museum are currently available for \$7,000 each. Exquisitely carved ivory statues of Indian courtesans from the 2nd century A.D. are for sale in Islamabad for \$35,000 each.

For thousands of years, Afghanistan was at the crossroads of conquest and commerce for ancient Iran, India, and Central Asia, and the museum's collection was an unmatched testament to that rich legacy. Archeologists and historians say the losses from the museum amount to the destruction of a major part of Afghanistan's cultural heritage.

"If new artifacts are dug up, they will be disconnected from the past because the record here has gone," says Clara Grissmann, an American art historian who recently went to Kabul to help Popol catalog the few pieces that remain. Because of the professionalism and thoroughness of the collection's ransacking, few Afghans are optimistic that the artifacts will be recovered.

The story of the Bagram collection is a typical case. Forty miles north of Kabul lies the village of Bagram. It is built over the 2nd-century city of Kapisa, the famed summer capital of the Kushan King Kanishka, whose empire stretched

from north India deep into Central Asia. In 1939, while excavating in the citadel of the Kushan fort, archeologists stumbled across two sealed rooms that contained "the most spectacular archeological find of the 20th century," according to Nancy H. Dupree, co-author of the *Guide to the National Museum of Afghanistan*. There were 1,800 lacquers, bronzes, ivories, glassware, and statues from Rome, Greece, Egypt, China, India, and Central Asia.

At the collection's heart lay 100 or more Indian ivory statues and reliefs, many of them exquisitely rendered depictions of dancing courtesans and goddesses. In attempting to track down the ivories, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* has learned from Afghan government officials and *mujahedin* leaders that during the fighting, they were stolen and flown to the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif and Uzbek warlord General Rashid Dostum. From there they reached Peshawar and later Islamabad and Europe. Twelve statues were sold to a London dealer for \$300,000. The dealer in turn sold the statues to a Japanese collector for \$600,000.

The museum's collection of 40,000 coins, ranging from the 8th century B.C. to the late 19th century, was one of the most extensive in the world. It included the largest Greek and Roman coins ever found and the Mir Zakah Hoard. The hoard, which was discovered under a spring near Kabul, yielded 11,500 coins, more than two tons of gold and silver, and spanned four centuries and civilizations from Rome to China. Every single coin has now disappeared.

The museum was also renowned for the fabulous collection of Bactrian gold, 21,000 gold objects dating from 100 B.C. to 100 A.D. Russian archeologists discovered the hoard in 1978 in northern Afghanistan. To discount rumors that the retreating Soviet army had taken the gold in 1989, former communist President Najibullah displayed the Bactrian gold to Western diplomats in Kabul in 1991. It was then packed into crates and moved to a vault in the Presidential Palace in central Kabul. The Bactrian gold is now under the direct control of President Burhanuddin Rabbani's military commander. However, no independent witnesses have confirmed that the collection is intact. *Far Eastern Economic Review* was recently offered a gold cup and plate allegedly from the Bactrian gold collection for \$19,000 in Lahore.

Rabbani's Kabul government is at-



Bagram collection ivory: Coveted in Tokyo.



# Kabul population faces bitterest winter

## Rs 329m of food aid for Afghans

KABUL (AFP) — The people of Kabul are fighting their toughest battle for survival amid renewed rocket barrages and rampant inflation as Afghan factions fight for power, aid workers say.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has warned that this winter may be the bitterest for Afghans, veterans of 16 years of conflict.

Peter Iseli, the ICRC's head of information in Kabul, said civilian suffering had worsened since the Taliban militia resumed its assault on the city in October.

"We are witnessing one of the world's humanitarian disasters, and if the fighting goes on, things will probably get even worse" he said.

"Bombings and rocket attacks on civilian areas have added to the already difficult conditions people experience."

"When one side or another starts dropping bombs or firing rockets on residential areas, this clearly shows a lack of respect for the civilian population," he added.

The ICRC has tried to sound the alarm for civilians in Afghanistan and other war stricken regions at the 26th international conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in Geneva.

ICRC chief Cornelio Sommaruga warned that the spread of ethnic conflicts and civil war, such as that in Afghanistan, meant the world could look forward to a new era of "pure barbarism."

His warning came as the bitter Afghan winter set in. Renewed fighting around the besieged capital has killed at least 112 civilians and injured scores in bomb and rocket attacks on residential areas. The Taliban siege of Kabul on three fronts has sent fuel and food prices rocketing. The Islamic militia has claimed responsibility for a bombing raid 10 days ago which killed 41 people, but said they had hit only military targets.

But whoever the players are in the latest round of fighting, the real losers in the conflict are the ordinary citizens

who have never taken up arms against any faction.

"I have never been to war, never killed and never meddled in politics, but I have to fight for my family's lives each day while the government goes to war with the Taliban," said Sarwar, a bearded 70-year-old former water-well digger, once the sole bread winner among his 16 relatives.

Last month he lost the use of his legs

in an accident, leaving his two widowed daughters — one of whom was crippled in a rocket attack which killed her husband 18 months ago — and their 13 children with no means of support.

"My daughters cannot work, one can hardly move and the other has to look after me and the children," he said. "I used to get paid in wheat, some of which I sold for rent money and the rest of which was used to make bread for our food. At least then we survived, now we have nothing."

"The children are cold and hungry, while we are terrified they will be hurt by rockets or bombs at any time, but there is nothing any of us can do."

"We are just waiting to die as things have just got worse in recent months," he sobbed while huddled under a blanket in his tiny one-room mud and brick house.

Sarwar and others like him have seen their suffering steadily increase since the Taliban first arrived on the outskirts of Kabul, threatening to topple the government, in March.

Zakia watched a her husband was torn apart by a rocket as he waited in line to be discharged from the army last year. On top of the emotional blow, his cut all income for her seven children and any hope of a better life.

"Until three years ago, life was great. We owned a shop and had enough money for all the essentials," she said.

"Now I am alone and cannot marry again and we have sold everything we ever owned to buy food for the youngsters."

"Prices are rising daily as the blockade around Kabul tightens, and I'm not sure how long we can all survive on my

brother's army wage of 80,000 Afghani (14 dollars) per month."

"If it had not been for this war and the targeting of civilian areas by various factions, our lives would still be perfect — now we know only misery," she said.

APP adds: The European Commission EC has committed 7.8 million ECU (equivalent to 329 million Pakistani Rupees) of food aid commodities to be channelled through World Food Programme, Afghanistan, for protracted refugee operations in Afghanistan, says an EU press release.

The food aid consists of 20,000 tons of wheat, 1,900 tons of sugar, 1,000 tons of vegetable oil and 2,000 tons of pulses. The food commodities will be used for developing infrastructure through community participation in order to promote self-reliance for returning Afghan refugees. In addition, a large number of internally displaced persons will also receive food-for-work assistance. By providing food for the repair and construction of roads, water and sanitation systems and schools, the relief assistance will reinforce WFP's emphasis on rehabilitation of infrastructure through food-for-work projects. A significant quantity of the wheat will be allocated to bakeries, which will prepare and sell bread at subsidised prices to the urban poor, using the funds generated to support local community projects.

The European Commission has already awarded 30.8 million ECU (Equivalent to 1.3 billion Pakistani Rupees) in 1995 for its Afghan Refugee Programme. The actions financed include food, medical assistance, water and sanitation for persons displaced by fighting and for the major areas of Kabul, Herat and Kandahar, as well as mines awareness and clearance. Also included was 9 million ECU (380 million Pakistani Rupees) for repatriation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan and Iran and their reintegration in Afghanistan.

From **AFGHANews** September:

The Taliban administration in Khost has imposed the following three conditions on the relief organizations operating in that province:

• Each organization has to employ one of the Taliban's men as a supervisor of their projects

• Each organization should provide information, in writing, about the amount of money allocated for each project.

• The provincial authorities of the Taliban will decide which projects should be given priority.

## Foreign aid obstructing Afghan peace: Abu Nafisa

From Ismail Khan

PESHAWAR: Conceding the UN failure to bring about peace in Afghanistan, Advisor to the UN Secretary General Special Representative on Afghanistan, Dr Sadek Abu Nafisa Sunday said continued foreign interference was also a contributing factor in obstructing peace prospects in the war-ravaged country.

"War is easy but to make peace is not", he told three-day seminar on Human Rights Abuses in Afghanistan. Speaking on behalf of the UN Special Envoy Mahmoud Mestiri, Dr Sadek, however, said the UN was determined not to let down the Afghans and would continue its efforts to bring lasting peace to their country. He said he was optimistic that the UN mission on Afghanistan would be able to help form a central government representing the will of the people. "At least we have made some progress in bringing the warring factions to talking terms and agreeing to look at the list", he said, while referring to the proposed list comprising representatives of mujahideen parties and the Taliban to form a future interim set-up in Kabul.

The anti-Rabbani alliance of Gulbadin Hikmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami, Dostum's Junbish-i-Milli, Shiite, Hezb-i-Wahdat and the Taliban militia have either rejected the list or proposed more names.

The Afghan factional leaders, he said, would have to keep their national interests above every thing else

but deplored that the Afghans who were able to liberate their country from foreign occupation suffered from human rights abuses due to continued infighting. He thought that foreign interference also obstructed peace in Afghanistan and appealed to the 'foreign countries' to refrain from meddling in the affairs of the war-torn country and let the Afghans decide their own fate.

Regarding Mestiri's departure to New York last month, Dr Sadek said the UN Ambassador would submit his report on Afghanistan to the General Assembly to be followed by discus-

## Low response to UN fund appeal for Afghans

From Our Correspondent

PESHAWAR—The United Nations in response to its appeal of 123.978 millions American dollars as financial assistance for war ravaged Afghanistan during October 1995 to September 1996 has received only \$12.90 pledges so far.

The United Nations assistance for Afghanistan in its latest report states only a few countries and organisations responded to its appeals for Afghanistan and provided funds for relief activities in that country. Not a single country announced pledges and funds for the social sector of the war ravaged Afghanistan.

The report said that United Kingdom has given heavy funds of \$45,87,904 to the United Nations. These funds included \$11,83,088 un earmarked while the remaining aimed at for coordination and relief management support, mine clearance, voluntary repatriation, health and physical infrastructure. The United Kingdom also provided 5,000 tonnes

of wheat to the United Nations for people of Afghanistan.

The Netherlands government also welcomed the UN appeals and provided pledges and funds upto \$24,68,153. The Netherlands assistance was 4,77,707 dollars for mine clearance, \$636,943 for food, \$7,16,561 for health, \$3,18,471 for physical infrastructure and \$3,18,471 for coordination and management services.

The Denmark government provided funds of US\$14,41,441 to the United Nations, Germany released funds of 24,511 dollars, Holy See handed over funds of 15,000 dollars and Switzerland of 12,38,938 American dollars.

Amongst the Muslim countries only Kuwait and Qatar's non-governmental organisations contributed assistance to the United Nations. An NGO of Qatar provided fund of \$30,000 to the United Nations for its relief activities in Afghanistan while an NGO from Kuwait has given 10,000 American dollars. NATION 12/25

## Food, fuel shortage worsens in Kabul

sion on the proposed draft resolution reflecting all aspects of the situation in the embattled country. He disclosed that 16 member states had recommended the continuation of UN peace mission on Afghanistan for another two years. He however, did not say as to when the term of the present mission was to expire.

Dilating on the human rights abuses in Afghanistan, he maintained, that peace was a pre-condition for the elimination of such practices. "The issue of human rights is the trade mark of every human struggle on earth", he remarked. He said that even Islam emphasised on the strict observance of human rights which stemmed from tolerance. The UN, he said, was particularly concerned about the continued violence against women in Afghanistan. "Without peace there is no protection of human rights", he stressed.

NATION 12/11

... the Red Cross said the food and fuel prices were now beyond the reach of almost 70 per cent of the population in Kabul. It said without help from abroad thousands of people might not survive the winter.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Najibullah Lafrai criticised the Islamic Aid agencies for virtually ignoring the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. At a recent conference of OIC Foreign Minister in Guinea, he said he had asked of humanitarian support from the Islamic countries. Mr Lafrai said everyone he talked to promised to help provided a broad based government is established and security is restored to Kabul. In effect that means no support from Islamic aid agencies will be forthcoming.

THE MUSLIM 12/20

## EC's Rs 260m humanitarian aid for Afghans

ISLAMABAD (APP) — The European Commission has announced new humanitarian aid of 5,730,000 ECU, (equivalent to Rs. 260 million Pakistani ), for the Afghan population.

According to the Press release the new aid will be mainly directed to the relief of suffering in Kabul, where actions will be implemented to provide medical care, sanitation, shelter and heating. In Kandahar, actions to provide medical care and sanitation, nutritional supplements, shelter and basic needs for vulnerable groups will be implemented.

These actions will be coordinated by the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and will be carried out by European NGOs and international aid organisations including the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of the Red Cross, Medecins Sans Frontieres (France), Medicins Sans Frontieres (Belgium), Solidarities (France), MERLIN (United Kingdom), German Agro Action (Germany), Pharmaciens Sans Frontieres (France), Action Internationale Contre La Faim (France), Oxfam (United Kingdom) and the Tear Fund (United Kingdom).

The new award brings the total amount of humanitarian aid for the Afghan people committed by the European Commission in 1995 to 36,915,000 ECU (1.7 billion Pakistani Rupees).

Actions already financed have included food, medical assistance, water and sanitation for persons displaced by fighting, (including the camps for displaced persons in Jalalabad), and for the major cities of Kabul, Herat and Kandahar, as well as mines awareness and mine clearance, rural reconstruction, restructuring of the public health network, re-afforestation, education and training.

Also included was an award of 9 million ECU to UNHCR for repatriation of Refugees from Pakistan and Iran and their reintegration in Afghanistan. **NATION 12/20**

## U.N. Says Afghans Face Food Shortages

KABUL, Afghanistan, Jan. 25 (Reuters) — The besieged residents of Kabul face a dire shortage of food unless new supplies reach the freezing Afghan capital soon, a United Nations official said today.

Martin Barber, the coordinator for the United Nations aid program in Afghanistan, warned in an interview that food stocks in Kabul would run out in two weeks unless routes into the city could be reopened.

Eleven days ago disputes within one opposition faction closed the road linking Kabul with Pakistan, the last supply route into the city.

Roads to the south and west of the city have been cut since October by fighting between forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani and the rebel Islamic Taleban militia. The road to the north has been shut by conflict between the Government and another opposition leader.

"There is no alternative to opening the routes," Mr. Barber said. "Otherwise people here face an imminent disaster."

Food prices have soared about 60 percent in Kabul in the past week, and aid agencies fear that the extreme cold, combined with the rising price of food and fuel, will have a devastating effect on residents.

**NYT 1/26**

## Fighting in Kabul Renewed

KABUL, Afghanistan, Dec. 19 (AP) — Rebel rocket attacks killed 2 people and wounded 27 in the Afghan capital today, just hours after the military repelled two guerrilla offensives.

The Government blamed the rocket assault on the Taliban, a rebel group camped just south of Kabul that is fighting to impose strict Islamic rule.

The United Nations warned today that continuing fighting and the onset of winter could take a staggering toll on civilians. Its campaign to raise \$124 million to help, begun in October, has netted \$12.9 million so far.

**NYT 12/20**

## Red Cross airlifts food to Afghans

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Red Cross flew 15 tons of food into the besieged Afghan capital Saturday, inaugurating airlifts to ease the hunger of thousands trapped by bitter factional fighting.

The flight also carried medical supplies, said the International Committee of the Red Cross.

"We received permission from all Afghan factions for these flights, so they should be safe," said Michael Greenwood, the Red Cross spokesman in Kabul.

Additional flights will continue over the next few weeks, bringing more than 1,000 tons into the capital, he said.

Food supplies in Kabul dwindled in recent weeks when most major land routes into the city were cut off by fighting between Afghanistan's warring factions.

Some of the fiercest fighting has been conducted by the Taliban militia, which has vowed to crush President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government and install stricter Islamic rule in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has been ravaged by civil war since 1992, when the communist government was ousted by Muslim guerrillas. The rebels then splintered and turned their guns on each other.

Up to 30 percent of the city's population does not have enough food to survive the winter, said Peter Stocker, head of ICRC operations in Afghanistan.

Entire city blocks in Kabul have been reduced to rubble in the past three years of civil war, leaving much of the population homeless.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has warned of a mass exodus from Kabul if fighting in and around the city does not ease.

**HARTFORD COURANT 2/4**

A spokesman of the former Afghan king, Mohammad Zahir Shah, told BBC on 6 November, that King Zahir is ready to assume power for an interim period if asked by the United Nations.

ACBAR News Summary - November

## Pakistan expels French NGO for aiding Rabbani

ISLAMABAD: The government has told 11 French members of an NGO working in Pakistan and Afghanistan to leave, reportedly over accusations that they aided the Kabul government.

Jean-Pierre Cautain, head of Madera, a private French organization working to resettle refugees in rural areas, told AFP Friday that the government had also ordered the closure of the group's offices in Pakistan. The workers had to leave by December 11, he said.

Cautain said he received the official notification of the expulsions on November 27. He said it did not give any reason.

French sources said the decision to expel Madera came after a Pakistani secret service investigation apparently concluded that the organization was channelling aid, mainly financial, to the Rabbani government.

Cautain denied that his organization has such a relationship with the Kabul government. "There's no foundation to these accusations. We're not involved

in any political activity, and we work in areas which are not under government control," he said.

France has been reputed, in some parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan, to support Massoud, in spite of the principles of neutrality and non-interference in Afghan affairs espoused by French representatives in the area.

Madera works mainly in Nangarhar, Kunar and Paghman, three provinces in eastern Afghanistan, and in the central province of Wardak, which is principally controlled by the Taliban, who are fighting to overthrow the rulers in Kabul.

Eighty-percent financed by the European Union, Madera is concerned with "rural rehabilitation." Its goal is to help the hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees who fled their country during the 1979-89 war against the Soviets, to return.

Cautain said that several months ago he was under fire from the Pakistani government and that he had received his first expulsion warning at the end of July, which was postponed. He said that he has gotten "marked support" from European diplomatic circles, especially the French, in this matter.—AFP NEWS 12/2

## Foreign NGOs asked to get re-registered

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR — The government has asked all the foreign-funded NGOs officials to re-register their organisations within two weeks. Well-placed sources told The Frontier Post on Wednesday that heads of Peshawar-based foreign NGOs had been directed through a letter from the prime minister's secretariat to follow the new rules in running their organisations.

The letter says that the chief of an NGO must be the national of the country funding the NGO and except for the chief all the employees in an NGO must be Pakistanis. Sources said that the decision on implementing the rules had been taken during Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's recent visit to Peshawar.

Frontier Post 1/4/96

## French NGO allowed extension

By Mariana Baahar

ISLAMABAD: Government on an advice from the foreign office has revised its earlier orders and has allowed the 11-member French NGO, Madera, to remain in Pakistan till December 27.

"The decision was made three days ago when the interior minister was still in town. After the expulsion orders were served on Madera they requested for an extension to wind up their work and we have agreed. Requests also came from the foreign office which we could not ignore", an official working on the case commented.

The government says conditions

in Pakistan today are not conducive to the activities of these NGOs which will, at the end of the day, be asked to leave. "The chief of Madera requested for a short visa which we agreed to. We have no information where this NGO is switching over but we have stuck to our decision", the official added.

Reports have suggested that the reason Madera requested for an extension was because they were moving into Afghanistan.

While four members of the NGO have already left, others including several NGOs from Peshawar will also have to take their work inside Afghanistan. Government figures put the number of foreign NGOs to two

hundred and five. The Bhutto government had, in a related move two years ago, also stopped all Afghan refugees from coming into Pakistan and the UNHCR were asked to put up camps at Jalalabad. The sick and wounded were however allowed to come into Pakistan. "If these foreign NGOs want to work for the Afghan people, there are many safe areas inside Afghanistan from where these NGOs can continue their activities", an official felt.

While the government earlier said that there were several considerations which necessitated review of performance and activities of these NGOs, it is not willing to give any details of what really Madera was involved in.

News 12/13/95

# ORGANIZATIONS

Landmines have crippled hundreds of thousands of Afghans. For many, hope now comes on two wheels. Words and pictures by Nick Danziger

THE CYCLISTS bump and weave insouciantly through a crush of lorries, cars, armoured personnel carriers, sheep, camels and motorised rickshaws. Through the dust, it is easy to miss the most striking aspect of the scene: the cyclists' lack of legs. Some have had a leg amputated below the knee, some above; some have lost both legs. In Jalalabad, no one sees anything odd in this. Here, as in most of Afghanistan, amputees are too ubiquitous to merit a second glance; and, although some of the cyclists seem a trifle unsteady on their wheels, they are probably in no greater danger of sudden death than other road-users. Yet their story is worth hearing; for they and their bicycles have become a symbol of the inextinguishable creativity of the human spirit.

Sixteen years after the Soviet invasion, and six years after the Soviet withdrawal, life in Afghanistan still tends towards the nasty, brutish and short. Civil war rages in most areas, and, even in zones of relative calm, citizens are rarely more than a step away from mutilation or death, thanks to that deadly legacy of the war: the land-mine. According to UN estimates, more than 10 million of the 110 million mines currently deployed around the world are scattered over Afghanistan. More than 450,000 Afghans have lost lower limbs to mines. In some parts of the country, up to 6 per cent of the population have undergone amputations; perhaps half as many have been killed by mines. Jalalabad is in one of the worst-affected areas, but it does have one thing in its favour: the Shaeed Qazi Nazir Centre.

Based in a small building in the grounds of the town's main hospital, the Centre (also known as the Afghan Amputee Bicyclists for Rehabilitation and Recreation Centre) is devoted to making amputees fully mobile, not with crutches, but with bicycles. It was established three years ago, by Howard Williams, a philanthropic Californian cycling enthusiast, and has been developed since then with the help of money from the Overseas Development Agency. The Centre also gives courses in literacy and first aid, but it is the cycles that everyone is interested in. The students begin their practical sessions on a bicycle that is fixed in place. Below-the-knee amputees have few problems mastering the actions required to pedal – and, later, balance – the bicycles; above-the-knee amputees and double amputees tend to take slightly longer. But everyone succeeds eventually, and, in the process, there are other skills to be learnt. The centre also has a mechanic who converts graduates' bicycles into mobile shops, adapted to offer pedal-powered knife-sharpening and candyfloss-making, milk-

shake- and juice-blending capabilities; so the amputees can not only get about but also support themselves. Their Chinese-made bicycles become as central to their lives as guide-dogs can be for blind people. One graduate, Maboushah, told me that he supports three members of his family by travelling through the region sharpening scythes and clippers for the local farmers, hatchets and

knives for the butchers, and swords. Other graduates readily find work as bicycle messengers and delivery men.

Faiz, a 19-year-old who spent five years in a refugee camp in Pakistan, lost his leg shortly after returning to Afghanistan. He was walking along a mountain path with his brother. "My brother picked up this green plastic thing, then he threw it on the ground. The next thing I knew I was being carried on the back of a donkey. It was a mine." The Shaeed Qazi Nazir Centre could not make him whole; it did give him a future. He now works as a bicycle porter, helping to distribute UN aid.

Demand for the one-month course at the centre is so great that, according to Dr Abdul Baseer, the main administrator, it is fully booked until December 1998. "We have 720 men on the waiting list, although children are accepted immediately. The problem is that because the mines are a long-term hazard, local hospitals continue to receive on average one mine-injured patient a day."

Fund-raising is a constant anxiety. Howard Williams has been encountering "compassion fatigue", and gimmicky activities like the participation of amputees in last year's Cycle Messenger World Championships are beginning to look like the only way of maintaining interest. But the demands on the Centre's resources can only increase. At current rates of removal, it will take more than 4,000 years for Afghanistan to be cleared of mines.

Modern landmines were recently described by a Red Cross official as "the greatest violators of international humanitarian law". Countries which have profited from their profitable use include Britain – a depressing thought, when one sees victims like Asadullah, a bright-eyed 12-year-old maimed for life by an indiscriminately planted mine.

But at the Shaeed Qazi Nazir Centre it is impossible to remain depressed for long. I saw Asadullah again when he had just passed the Centre's road safety test, at the third attempt. "I can't fit into my clothes," he told me – Afghan (roughly) for "I'm over the moon."

Sunday Independent (London)

12/17

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*With the once hospitable Peshawar having turned hostile on account of the Pakistan government's actions against them, the Arab population in the Frontier metropolis has now dwindled to about 120, while a large number of them are believed to be living in Afghanistan, reports Rahimullah Yusufzai*

**A**ccording to official estimates, 6170 Arabs from several Middle Eastern and African countries came to Pakistan during the six-year period starting 1987, either to take part in the Afghan 'jihad' or to pursue humanitarian work.

By April 1993, when the Pakistan government launched an operation to expel illegal foreigners, about 2,800 of these Arabs hadn't returned and were believed to be living either in Pakistan or neighbouring Afghanistan.

These figures include only those Arabs who were registered upon their arrival in Peshawar, which happened to be the focal point for all volunteers reaching Pakistan to join the Afghan war or to help displaced Afghans. It is possible that some Arabs came before 1987 and many others weren't registered.

Of the 6170 Arabs who were registered in NWFP, Egyptians topped the list with 1142 arrivals. Next came the Saudis who totalled 981 and the Yemenis who numbered 946. Algerians (792) were next in number, followed by Jordanians (711), Iraqis (326), Syrians (292), Sudanese (234), Libyans (199) and Tunisians (117). Those from Morocco totalled 102, Qatar 92, Palestine 70, Kuwait 60, Bahrain 35 and Oman 11.

# Where to after the 'jihad'?

During 1987-93, as many as 3340 Arabs reported their departure from Pakistan to the government. They included 684 Saudis, 655 Yemenis, 548 Egyptians, 414 Algerians, 361 Jordanians, 130 Syrians, 123 Sudanese, 82 Libyans and 67 Qataris.

On the eve of the police crackdown against illegal foreigners, especially Arabs, living in Peshawar on April 6, 1993, government officials estimated that about 2830 Arabs were either living in NWFP or had shifted to Afghanistan. Among them were 594 Egyptians, 410 Jordanians, 410 Libyans, 291 Yemenis, 279 Saudis, 255 Iraqis,

following complaints by Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia exercised pressure on the Peshawar-based Islamic NGOs, most of which were Arab, not to employ Egyptians, Algerians and Tunisians. These NGOs were also asked to curtail their Arab staff in keeping with the scope of their humanitarian operations. All these measures were aimed at bringing the Arab presence in Peshawar to a bare minimum. Such steps went a long way to convince the Western and Arab governments worried about terrorism and radicalism emanating from Peshawar about Islamabad's commitment not to allow its soil to be

used by militant Islamist elements. Ernaments would certainly have apprehended them. Fighting mostly from their own independent bases during the Afghan 'jihad' they found it difficult to take side when Dr Najibullah's regime collapsed in April 1992 and the mujahideen started fighting amongst themselves. According to son reports,

Hezb-i-Islar (Hekmatyar) had some 600 Arab in his bases in Afghanistan, Pro Sayyaf's Ittehad-i-Islami had about 500 and late Maulana Jamil Rahman's Ahle Hadith party had 300 during the war. Later, a number of them aligned themselves with Gulbaddin Hekmatyar or even fought against President. Burhanuddin Rabbani's government. They also fought on Sayyaf's side against the Shii



Hezb-i-Wahdat in Kabul. Frustrated by the mujahideen infighting, the Arab supporters appear to have given up hope about restoration of durable peace and enforcement of an Islamic system in Afghanistan. Many

Arabs who volunteered to fight in Afghanistan to embrace martyrdom or become 'ghazis' later fought against the Moscow-backed neo-communist regimes in Tajikistan. Some who would be unwelcome in most countries, the world still find Afghanistan a safe haven. Most would like to return home but that could not happen once their repressive governments back home are ousted. That explains the armed struggle now under way in Egypt and Algeria. That Afghan Arabs are in the forefront of this armed struggle shows the Afghanistan connection of the Egyptians and Algerians who came here during the Afghan 'jihad' and honed their skills in guerrilla warfare.

**The Arabs who took refuge in Afghanistan to avoid arrest and deportation from Pakistan lived mostly in provinces bordering Pakistan. Most of them couldn't, or didn't want to return home where their conservative, pro-West governments would certainly have apprehended them.**

162 Syrians, 117 Algerians, 111 Sudanese, 63 Tunisians, 53 Moroccans, 32 Palestinians, 25 Qataris, 20 Kuwaitis, 16 Bahrainis and 6 Omanese.

Arabs working at that time at the more than a dozen Islamic non-government organizations (NGOs) based in Peshawar numbered more than 700. Some 500 of them were physically identified by NWFP government officials and issued identification papers to regularise their stay in the province. The remaining were believed to have either returned to their native countries or crossed over to Afghanistan.

Subsequently, the government

used by militant Islamist elements. With the once hospitable Peshawar having turned hostile on account of the Pakistan government's actions against them, the Arab population in the Frontier metropolis has now dwindled to about 120. They too are mostly aid workers and possess valid visas for Pakistan. Some of them have also acquired Pakistani citizenship.

The Arabs who took refuge in Afghanistan to avoid arrest and deportation from Pakistan lived mostly in provinces bordering Pakistan. Most of them couldn't or didn't want to return home where their conservative, pro-West gov-

## Made in Afghanistan

*As young Pakistanis returned from their 'jihad' in Afghanistan, their services were quickly hired by militant organisations here, writes Rana Jawad*

**P**akistani intelligence agencies appear convinced that the unabated terrorism in the country, mostly sect-motivated, is a direct fallout of the bloody Afghan war which had provided various sectarian groups with large cadres of trained youth and huge piles of sophisticated weapons.

Although no complete record is

available on actually how many Pakistanis went to Afghanistan to take part in the war, a senior police official says that two to three thousand young Pakistanis, responding to the call of jihad by various groups, fought alongside the Afghans.

A majority of them were students in various madaris run by Pakistan's mainstream religious parties like Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Jamiat Ahle-Hadith and Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan. And though most of them received

their military training in Afghanistan, some of these groups are known to have run their own training camps inside Pakistan.

"It is a fact that the Pakistanis who have been fighting in Afghanistan are mainly responsible for the crescendoing terrorism in the country," a top official of a secret agency told *The News* on Friday.

"Once the war was over, they returned home, and as they wandered in search for work and indeed,

identity, they were picked up by parties keen to capitalise on their militant skills," he said.

"While in Afghanistan, they were exposed to various Islamist movements and it was there that they were moulded into the cast of so-called Islamic fundamentalists. Besides, it is the hang-over of 'defeating a super power' that makes these zealots believe that anything under the sun can be achieved through the tactics employed in Afghanistan."

In 1993, authorities in Jhang arrested a young man wanted in several murders committed on sectarian grounds. The interrogation revealed that he had fought in Afghanistan for almost three years.

After studies at a Pakistani madrasah run by one of the leading religious parties, he had later joined the ranks of the Afghan group, Jami'at Dawat-ul-Qurana-wul-Sunnah. During his stay in Afghanistan, his family were paid Rs. 4,000 per month, but it was discontinued when he returned home. Lacking any other skill to make a living, a few months later he joined a militant sectarian group. This time he was given an even better 'salary' — Rs. 10,000 per month.

The young man has since managed to escape from the police custody, but his case provides a perfect example as to how the Afghan war veterans were drafted into militant organisations in Pakistan.

Same goes true for Riaz Basra convicted in the murder of Iranian diplomat, Aqai Sadiq Gupji, outside a Lahore hotel.

Belonging to a very poor family, Basra became the most wanted person on the police list after he returned from Afghanistan where he was trained in combat skills. He too escaped from the police custody, last year.

When jihad and big monetary returns combine, there seems little reason to be shocked by the ultimate product — a militant, a species there is no dearth of in Pakistan.

Can the country get rid of the breed in the near future? Sadly, the scenario is bleak. Even if the government chalks out a comprehensive plan today to put an end to the phenomenon and starts implementing it in all seriousness, it will have to travel a long path before it can actually achieve its goal. However, so far as the short-term remedies go, the government would do better to keep a close watch on the elements who do not hesitate at all to kill innocent people to achieve their 'noble' cause, instead of employing all its intelligence agencies to monitor the activities of the opposition leaders.

# From Afghan war to Adams Morgan eatery

A decade ago, culinary choices for Pat O'Donnell meant stale rice, sheep fat and old bread.

Maybe that diet is what prompted the Adams Morgan resident to enter the restaurant business upon his return from photographing the war in Afghanistan in the late 1980s.

O'Donnell owns the Little Fountain Cafe and Angles bar at 2339 18th Street.

Although he's no longer an active photojournalist, O'Donnell has decorated Angles — which opened in September — with pictures from the Afghan war and of Asia, including a shot of the largest free-standing Buddha in the world. He said he hopes to expand his collection in the future with pictures from other photographers.

In addition to the thrill that the life of a photojournalist can offer, O'Donnell's tour of duty in Afghanistan offered him a unique view of a war that played a central role in the collapse of the former Soviet Union.

O'Donnell got his start in photography when he was living in Washington after graduating from Georgetown University in the late 1970s. Originally from Pittsburgh, O'Donnell said his trip to Afghanistan as a photographer was a radical change from the life he had been leading.

"It was kind of a leap," he said. "But at that stage of my life, I was interested in taking a leap." O'Donnell's work involved sneaking across the Afghan border from Pakistan and spending weeks or months with Mujahedin rebel units. Often, O'Donnell accompanied these units on raids against the Soviets.

The life wasn't easy. On his first trip, for

instance, O'Donnell contracted Malaria and lost 35 pounds on a diet that rarely exceeded stale rice, sheep fat and old bread.

"I think I've had a whole new attitude toward food because of that trip," O'Donnell said.

O'Donnell escaped his Afghanistan tour without serious injury, although he was shot at repeatedly during raids and was wounded once during an air attack.

But despite the omnipresence of the war, O'Donnell said he spent time capturing the culture of the Afghan people as well. A particularly enjoyable assignment, he said, was shooting a game

where Afghan tribesmen on horseback tried to carry a goat across a goal line. He said the game was quite violent but fascinating to cover as a photographer.

From a political standpoint, O'Donnell said it was interesting to watch the decline of the Soviet Union correspond with its military frustrations in Afghanistan. From what he could see, the Red Army's eventual withdrawal had a marked impact on the Soviet Union.

"A society like the Soviet Union rested

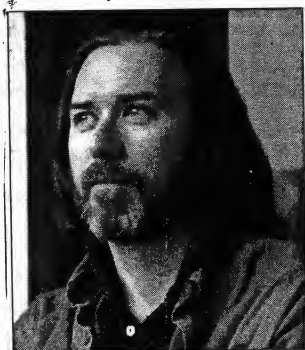
pretty heavily on the prestige of the military and the myth of invincibility of that military," O'Donnell said. "That myth was pretty totally destroyed."

In 1992, when he bought the Little Fountain, O'Donnell was once again looking for a change. Choosing to become a restaurateur was not hard.

"A friend of mine said, 'There's this cute little place for sale down on 18th street. Why don't you go take a look at it?'" O'Donnell said.

— Christopher Belles

## SHORT TAKES



Bill Petros/The Current

### Restaurant owner Pat O'Donnell

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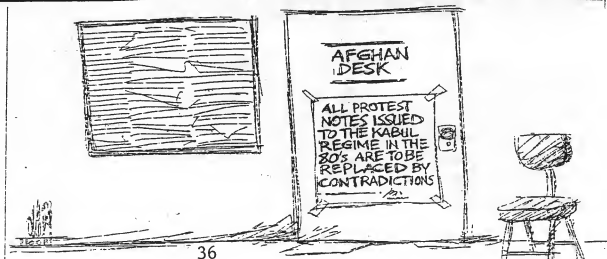
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1995

THE CURRENT

NEWS

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# Beyond the veil

**Rachael Tapsell talks to Eve-Ann Prentice about the practical problems and unexpected humiliation she experienced wearing the Islamic veil**

THE IDEA OF having to cover your face whenever you are in public is one which is totally alien to Western women. Yet that is exactly what I had to do when I spent five months working as a nurse in Afghanistan.

There was no option; if I wanted to work there I had to wear the burqa, an all-enveloping veil which not only obscured my face but, as time wore on, had a horribly isolating effect on my personality.

I had travelled to Kandahar as part of a team sent by the British medical aid agency, Merlin. Just being there was something of a triumph; I was the first Western woman allowed into the area by the Islamic group which took control of the region last October.

Until my arrival, it had been impossible for the British team to treat Afghan women. The Islamic authorities ban women from being treated by male doctors, while at the same time forbidding women to train as health workers.

It was quite an achievement, then, for them to agree that I could work there as a nurse. They only did so on condition that I wear the burqa in public at all times.

Burqas are made of a sort of nylon fabric and are usually grey, black or, as mine was, green. They are also very expensive by Afghan standards — mine cost \$5,000 Afghanis (£1), an enormous outlay when you consider that the average salary is a mere 40,000 Afghanis a month. As a result, two or three families often share the same one, and since women are not allowed out of their homes unless they are

wearing a burqa, this means that the majority of women spend most of their time indoors.

But although the Afghan women did not have to wear the veil unless they went out, if there were men in the house, they had to hide in the kitchen. I used to see them peeping from behind the door.



**Rachael Tapsell had to wear a burqa to work as a nurse in Afghanistan**

During my five months there, I never got used to the burqa. For Western women used to being able to wear anything they like, the restrictions it places upon you are at best disorienting, at worst frightening.

From a purely practical point of view, the burqa makes even the simplest tasks difficult. It is like wearing a snorkel, only worse. You have tunnel vision, and what you can see is hazy, obscured by the criss-cross mesh of the material.

As the streets in Kandahar are rubble-strewn and the burqa is astonishingly voluminous, I found myself constantly tripping up. My shins were permanently bruised but this was a small price to pay compared to the fate of many Afghan women, who are often knocked down by cars because they cannot see.

Wearing it indoors was almost as bad; when I was working at the hospital at Kandahar, I often ended

up dragging chairs across the floor, their legs caught in my burqa's ballooning folds.

**A**fghan women are used to the restrictions placed upon them by the veil, because they have to begin wearing it as soon as they reach puberty. But they defy the Islamic laws by wearing make-up, stilettoes and glitzy clothes underneath.

However, the burqa does have some advantages, chiefly offering women protection. Kandahar is ruled by an Islamic faction known as the Taliban, which enforces wearing the veil, but when it was under the control of the Mujahidin, women who did not wear a burqa were often kidnapped and taken into the hills to look after wounded fighters. After the Taliban took over, we heard about one of our team who was beaten for having her face uncovered.

For me, it was very difficult. My job meant I was out far more than the local women, and therefore I had to wear a burqa far more frequently. But I did insist on having my face uncovered when I had to negotiate with the Taliban, for example at meetings when I was persuading them to focus on female and child health. They agreed I could take the veil off, but would always remind me to cover my face when I left.

Matters came to a head when my translator and I were seen in our Jeep without our burqas on properly. I was sent a letter which said my translator would have to leave

veil, and from May this year the rules have been lifted.

The Merlin nurses who are now carrying on the work in Kandahar are being treated much more leniently by the authorities. I think they were testing me and their stereotype of a Western woman.

I am delighted that the women who followed me have escaped the veil, because although the physical restrictions were frustrating, what was far more ominous was its psychological effect.

When you wear the veil, it is as though you have ceased to exist. People do not look at you or acknowledge you. I don't consider myself to be neurotic, but there were times when I could only express emotions by crying behind the veil. There was no other outlet. I couldn't go for a swim or even a brisk walk.

What I remember most is the feeling of frustration and isolation it caused. I became very withdrawn when I wore it. After five months I felt I was becoming confused and irrational.

By the time I left I had grown to hate the veil. It became dirty and torn in the dusty, shell-holed streets, but I didn't want to waste the time or the cotton in mending it. But the other women pressed me, so I did, out of respect for them.

I brought my burqa back with me and every so often I look at it with loathing, although I accept that it was part of a culture that I had to work within. For me, it was an ordeal which lasted just five months; for the Afghan women, it is a fact of life, and they will always have my sympathy.

● Merlin is based at la Rede Place, London W2 4TU.



**Rachael today back in Britain**

immediately and that I would be barred in future if I didn't obey the rules. I was furious, and told the authorities I was trying to run a medical programme and had done my best. At first, the mullah denied writing the letter but then he not only admitted it, he apologised, which was astounding. After that, the Taliban decided Western women did not have to wear the

**THE TIMES**

**DECEMBER 8 1995**

Betsy Lebenson, who served in Afghanistan with Peace Corps Group 3, died recently of cancer.

# Taliban kill artists

Salim Shaheen sobs amid the debris of Afghanistan's last remaining film studio.

At 10:45 a.m. on November 11, while filming a scene for his latest movie, a rocket fired by Taliban rebels came crashing through a window and killed virtually everyone on the set.

The film was ironically entitled "No Survival."

The camera was running when the rocket landed and the impact of the blast has been captured on film.

It was the deadliest single strike on a day when Taliban militiamen rained rockets and artillery shells on the capital, killing 36 civilians.

Nine people in the studio died on the spot, including director Hamayoon Sadozai, one of Afghanistan's best-known film makers.

Shaheen, the burly 30-year-old owner of Qais Film Studios, the only private film production company still operating in this war-torn country, was on the set when the rocket landed.

The missile smashed a hole through a six-inch-thick floor made of concrete and peppered the studio with jagged bits of metal.

Shaheen was thrown out of a window by the force of the blast but miraculously emerged without a scratch.

"I was stunned but not hurt," he said. "Then I looked into the room."

"There was blood everywhere and people were missing heads and arms and legs."

Movie star Sharif Khairkhwah, 45, famed for his Sylvester Stallone-type action roles, was among the dead along with another top actor, Atiqullah Zahoor.

The heroine, a 21-year-old up-and-coming actress named Zarghuna, was also killed.

Actor Nasim Sahar was decapitated. His 11-year-old daughter, who had come to watch her father on the set, died too.

Noor Hamid, a cameraman described as a man with a "golden eye,"

was killed while another camera operator was grievously wounded.

Two other crew-members were killed while actor Wais Bahram is clinging to life in hospital having lost both legs and both eyes.

Another victim - a medical doctor and part time actor named Yousuf - is in a coma.

Two of the dead were newly engaged to be married.

Shaheen bends down to sift through the broken glass and other debris that litters the floor and picks up a pair of items.

"This is all that is left of Nasim Sahar," he said holding up a mangled pair of steel eye-glass frames.

"And this is all that is left of his

daughter," he adds, staring down at a girl's hair clip in his hand.

Breaking down in tears, Shaheen asked: "What did we ever do to the Taliban?" "This is the work of butchers," he said.

Artists in other countries have lives full of joy," he said. "And we don't even know why we're dying."

In the studio garden is a heap of blood stained armchairs, broken tables, shreds of film posters and mangled props.

"I am ruined, bankrupt," Shaheen said. "I don't even have anything left to give to the families of the dead." (AFP)

AFGHANews Vol 11, No 12

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## A Film Made in Afghanistan Is a Post-Communist First

KABUL, Afghanistan, Dec. 31 (Reuters) — An Afghan production company has released the first feature-length film completed entirely in Afghanistan since the fall of the Communist Government in 1992.

The director of the company, Sidiq Barmaque, said that it had taken two and a half years to make the movie, called "Uruj," or "Ascension".

"We finished filming in just three months in the summer of 1993," Mr. Barmaque said. "But a lack of electricity, equipment that kept breaking down and a shortage of funds meant we couldn't get the post-production work done until now."

"When we tried to buy spare parts for some of our gear from the United States," he said, "the suppliers wanted to buy the equipment as museum pieces."

The two-and-a-half-hour movie tracks the transformation of a humble village baker into a rebel fighter battling the Soviet forces occupying Afghanistan during the 1980's.

The Soviet military withdrew at the end of the decade, and the Afghan rebels, known as the mujahedeen, took the capital in April 1992. But peace did not last for long: rival

mujahedeen factions soon were battling among themselves and with other groups for control of the country.

The film company, Afghan Films, had to shoot much of the film in the province of Parwan because it was the only accessible area in which there was no fighting.

Two of the film's stars were killed this year when a rocket exploded at the company's studios during a battle for Kabul between pro-Government forces and the Taliban, an Islamic militia.

All of the actors in the movie were Afghans, and all but one were amateurs.

The producer, Noor Hashem Abir, said the movie had cost the equivalent of \$40,000 to make and that financing had come from both the Government and from private investors.

"They all wanted to help re-establish the important role of theater in this country," Mr. Abir said.

"We hope that by making this film, and the two others we are planning, we will be able to re-equip ourselves and retrain people to get the Afghan film industry moving again."

NYT 1/1/96

# Fate of thousands in Kabul depends on British nurse

FROM MICHAEL DYNES IN KABUL

ANNIE SEWELL, the British-born nurse who masterminds the Red Cross's vast medical operation in the besieged city of Kabul, has a reputation for getting things done.

In a city of one million inhabitants, where 85 per cent of the buildings have been reduced to rubble, where most of the people are freezing, and where everyone is subject to the daily gauntlet of random shelling, you have to be a bit pushy to make an impact.

Yet the fate of thousands of men, women and children depends on this former National Health Service nurse, who trained at St Thomas' Hospital, south London, and who spent 15 months in Sarajevo escorting relief convoys. On her shoulders rests the responsibility for breaching the siege of Kabul so that the capital's hospitals are supplied with the equipment needed to piece together shattered lives.

Waiting for the first land convoy to arrive from Jalalabad for three years, her anxiety is palpable. "We're expecting six Red Cross trucks loaded with 40 tonnes of medical supplies which we need desperately," she said. "It's going to be a tough winter if the local warlords decide not to let it through."

When the six lorries finally arrive at the Red Cross's Karte Farwan warehouse, next door to the old British embassy complex, Miss Sewell is on site to take control. Her first problem is to reassure the Afghan drivers that they will be reimbursed for the backhanders they had to pay the local warlords to secure safe passage. Her second is to ensure that the convoy is rapidly broken up and dispersed before it can be wiped out by a single rocket.

As the long-awaited medical supplies, from huge bales of gauze for dressing wounds to



ADRIAN BROOKS

Annie Sewell, a former NHS nurse, oversees the huge Red Cross operation in war-battered Kabul "where everyone is cold and hungry"

the latest drugs for treating dysentery and diarrhoea, are unloaded by a gang of undernourished market porters. Miss Sewell betrays the first sign of despair.

"The last time I was here in 1992, the Mujahidin were in the hills, President Najibullah was about to fall, and we all thought that that would be the end of it," she said.

"Three years later, there has been more devastation, more destruction, and more killing than in the whole 16 years of war. I see no end to it. Everyone is cold and hungry, and there is no end in sight."

The job was much easier last time. "We had electricity then. Now there's no power, not even for the traffic lights. So many different groups have shelled the city over the past 16 years. But the hospitals have always been full, mostly of children," she said.

In the children's ward of the Karte-e-Charn hospital, one of four supplied by the International Committee of the Red Cross, Miss Sewell takes us on a tour, indicating the young casualties. There, beneath the

peeling paint and the sand-bagged windows, lay row after row of silent children displaying their amputated legs and arms, while being nursed by their anguished mothers. All were victims of the estimated six to seven million landmines

laid in the capital, making Kabul the most heavily mined city in history.

For these child mine victims, whose bodies are still growing, the agony can last until their late teens. When the bone begins to pierce the stump, they have to return to hospital for further surgery, and a new artificial limb.

The cost of making a new leg for a below-the-knee amputation is around \$120 (£78), compared to the \$1 cost of the mine that removed it in the first place. There are about 50,000 amputees in Afghanistan. Even if the fighting stops tomorrow, said Miss Sewell, and there is little chance of that, "there will be mine victims for a thousand years".

□ **Peace hopes:** Alauddin Brujerdi, the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister, said during a visit to Kabul yesterday that he is "more optimistic" about the prospects of brokering a peace as the warring Afghan factions now seemed keener to negotiate. (AFP)

THE TIMES  
DECEMBER 23 1995

tempting to retrieve artifacts still inside Afghanistan, but with the country divided and still at war, it has little chance of doing so. Notes one Afghan art historian, "When Afghans are suffering from the ravages of war, are hungry and without schools, it is not easy to persuade them that this task is very important."

—Ahmed Rashid, "Far Eastern Economic Review" (conservative news-magazine), Hong Kong, Sept. 21, 1995.

WORLD PRESS REVIEW • DECEMBER 1995

## Afghan rebels make hairy new rule for men

Associated Press

PESHAWAR, Pakistan — The rebels who hold much of southern Afghanistan have decreed that unless men grow beards in line with Islamic practices, they won't be allowed to work except as street sweepers, it was reported Sunday.

Street cleaning is considered among the lowliest of jobs in much of the Islamic world.

Taliban rebels, many of whom are former Muslim religious students, say clean-shaven men are breaking with Islamic rituals, Pakistan's English-language newspaper The News reported.

Since entering the Afghan civil war in late 1994, the Taliban rebels have captured much of the southern half of the country and are encamped on the outskirts of Kabul, the capital.

Where they have assumed control, Taliban leaders have forced residents to live by a strict Islamic code of conduct. Women must give up their jobs, education for girls is limited and men are expected to meet with Muslim prayer and dress rituals.

Valley Times (San Francisco)  
1/8/96

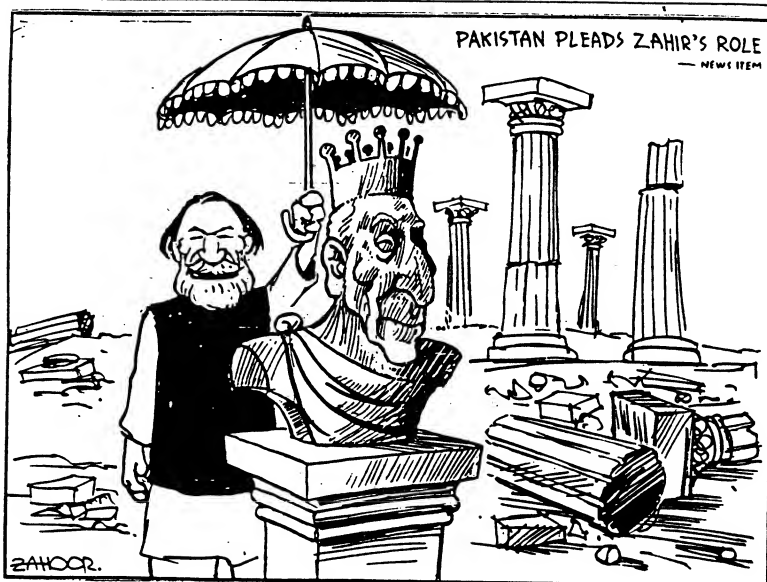
### MUSLIM WORLD MONITOR

## Pakistan's Role

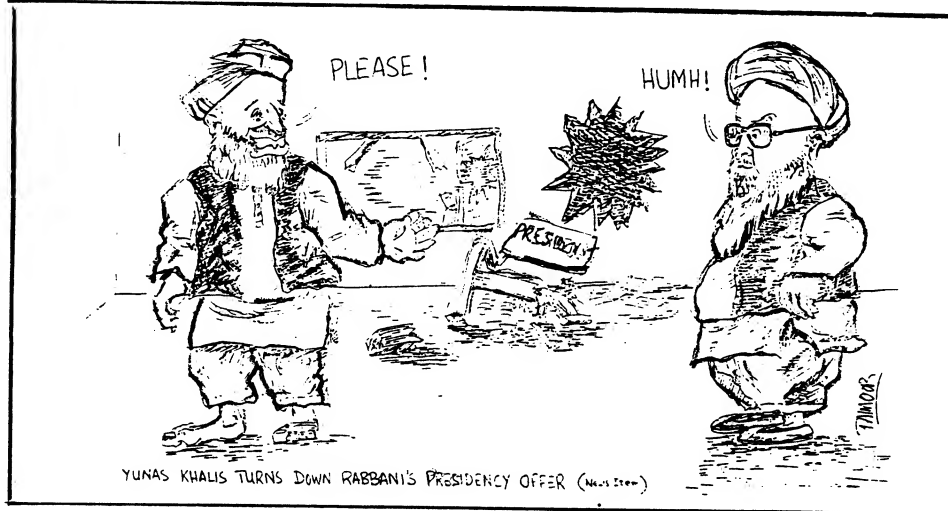
The renewed fighting has set off a diplomatic confrontation between Pakistan and Afghanistan on one hand and between Pakistan and other regional countries including India, Iran and Russia on the other. The regional states have accused Pakistan of supporting the Taleban

Continued on next page...

THE FRONTIER POST  
PESHAWAR 10/10



THE MUSLIM Tuesday, October 31, 1995



THE MUSLIM Monday, November 6, 1995



# Afghan wonder boy's prospects tarnished by war

KABUL (AFP) — Aid workers in war-ravaged Kabul were stunned when a toddler from a poor family offered to teach illiterate women to read and write — and then promptly proved he could.

Nearly seven years later, 10-year-old wonder boy Sayed Azam is still amazing his battle-weary countrymen, this time by becoming Afghanistan's youngest medical student.

But, unlike his colleagues, the serious child with the haunted look in his eyes is forced after lectures to pull a trolley through the city's muddy lanes as he peddles drinking water door-to-door to help his family survive.

Every morning on his way to college, he holds his father's hand as they pass shell-shattered buildings near their small mud home, before joining his class of 300 students aged between 18 and 30.

The only differences between him and the other would-be doctors, is that he prefers sitting on the women's side of the segregated class and that he has never known childhood.

"When I began medicine everybody was stunned and I found groups of students and lecturers standing round me asking what I was doing there," Sayed says, his large brown eyes fixed intently on his subject.

"But they got used to me, realised that I am serious about being a doctor and now seem to treat me like something special and my classmates are now my friends," he says.

The feeling of being out of place at school was not new for Sayed, who hopes to graduate as a general practitioner in less than the usual seven years.

At two-and-a-half he was writing, and reading magazines and newspapers in his native Persian. At three he began studying simultaneously at a primary school, a teachers' training college and a Koranic school after the ministry of education pronounced him: a national genius.

At the end of his first primary school year, Sayed jumped seven grades to join the 15-year-olds, while he flew through the first three years of teaching college, documents show.

"We knew he was different from the day he was born," asserts his father, Sayed Mohammed Iqbal,

37, an official at the under-worked tourism ministry who earns just 80,000 Afghanis (14.5 dollars) a month to support his family of seven.

"He was exceptionally pensive-looking and quiet and when he turned two, he became fascinated by paper and pens and was soon drawing and copying words from the papers," he recalls.

"I began teaching him to read and write and within six months he could do both fluently. We realised his genius but didn't know what to do about it," he said.

A few months later, a group scouring the city to recruit illiterate women — about 70 percent of Afghans cannot read or write — for remedial classes, stumbled upon the toddler.

"He offered to teach the women to read and write which provoked ridicule from our visitors. One of them jokingly tossed him a magazine, which he began to read with an ease that floored them," the boy's father laughed.

The former communist authorities soon spotted him and launched his education, but it was interrupted three years later by the civil war which has wracked Afghanistan ever since, claiming at least 25,000 civilian lives since 1992. It also brought the education system to a standstill, cutting a four-year hole in Sayed's studies.

But he was granted an "honorary" school-leaving diploma in recognition of his talent, while the uni-



KABUL: A 10-year-old boy wonder, Sayed Azam (C) sits with his family in their house in the poor suburbs of Kabul on Wednesday. He is his country's youngest medical student, but is forced to sell water after lectures to help support his family.—AFP photo FRONTIER POST 12/14

versity asked him to begin medical studies provisionally last March to assess his ability.

"He's a very bright boy indeed with an IQ of about 180, and it's true that we haven't seen such a remarkable phenomenon here before," says Mohammed Yussufpur, the faculty's head of biology and teaching who accepted Sayed as a student.

"We are guiding him academically as he has missed a lot of crucial basic physics and biology and is having a few difficulties in two subjects, but I have no doubt he will soon catch up, be permanently enrolled and then race ahead of many of the other students," Yussufpur said.

Sayed says he loves studying medicine and doesn't mind helping the family out by selling water.

"I have nothing else to do anyway, I don't get on very well with children of my age because they don't seem to understand what I'm talking about," he announces matter of factly.

His father is less accepting of his son's fate. "He has been recognised as a genius, but he is just mentally wasting away among these bombs and rockets and poverty," he says, choking back tears.

## Afghan war generates growing army of orphans

KABUL: Afghanistan's civil war is leaving behind it a growing army of abandoned and traumatised orphans who, without proper care, could become a lost generation of criminals, aid workers warn.

Only a fraction of the estimated hundreds of thousands of war orphans are being cared for professionally or by relatives, leaving the others to roam the streets as beggars, shoe polishers or thieves, they say.

Fresh fighting, particularly around blockaded Kabul, has meant that many families have taken in all the orphaned relatives they can, while only 7,000 places exist in the country's 18 cash-strapped orphanages. At least four million young Afghans have lost their parents in the last 16 years of endless fighting here, and as their numbers continue to swell, any hope of caring for them appears to be dimming, they say.

"Islamic tradition dictates that the closest living relative should take in orphaned family members, but very often these are just more unwanted mouths to feed," a foreign aid worker based here said.

"The result is that they often get treated badly and run away only to end up among the rising numbers of street urchins, while others simply have no one left to adopt them in the first place," she added.

Both Abdul Quaim's parents were killed when a rocket hit the family home when he was 18 months old, leaving him uninjured but alone in the world, Zarghona Tarshi, a worker at Kabul's sole orphanage said.

"When he first came here he would not come out from under the bed. He's better now, but whenever a door slams or he sees a bright light he begins screaming and then hides himself in the smallest place he can find.—APP NEWS 1/5 '96"

## AFGHANISTAN RELIEF COMMITTEE ENDS OPERATIONS

As of January, 1996, the New York-based Afghanistan Relief Committee, founded in late 1979, has gone out of existence. During its 16 years of existence the ARC disbursed more than \$2 million in private humanitarian aid, focussing on cross-border aid inside war-torn Afghanistan. In 1980 - 1981 the Committee was also instrumental in persuading the U. S. Congress to vote \$20 million in official aid for Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

Except for some fund-raising functions, the ARC was entirely volunteer. Founded by Rosanne Klass, it was headed first by attorney Gordon A. Thomas and later by investment counselor John Train. Its honorary co-chairmen were, over the years, the late Lowell Thomas, James A. Michener, William E. Simon and Dr. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick; its honorary board included all former U. S. ambassadors to Afghanistan and many members of the House and Senate, as well as distinguished scholars and artists. The ARC raised its funds through contributions from the general public and occasional foundation grants and donations of supplies.

It dispensed aid — primarily medical but also food, warm clothing and educational assistance — through agencies working in the field. Before 1992 most of the necessarily clandestine cross-border operations it assisted were carried out by European organizations, particularly Médecins Sans Frontières [Doctors Without Borders], and also by Aide Médical International, Médecins du Monde, Guilde Européenne du Raid, Afrane, the Santé Sud inoculation program, the Deutsches Afghanistan Komitee vaccine project, and others — e.g., in 1983, when the Panjsher, under attack, faced famine, the ARC provided the funds carried into Panjsher by French volunteers to stave off starvation. The ARC was the sole U. S. affiliate of the Coordination Humanitaire Européenne pour l'Afghanistan [CHEA].

In the U. S., the ARC helped Freedom Medicine get started and also supported projects of the Dignity of Man Foundation, the Direct Relief Foundation, Americares, the International Medical Corps, and the International Rescue Committee.

The Afghanistan Relief Committee also undertook a public information function, focussing particularly on making the public aware of atrocities against the Afghan civilian population. These informational activities were funded by foundation grants. In 1980, it arranged for the opening day of the Moscow Olympics to be proclaimed "Afghanistan Day" by President Carter and governors of all the states. In 1983 the ARC arranged for two groups of eyewitnesses to the Padkhwab-i-Shana massacre and other atrocities to tour Europe and meet Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl and other national leaders, then brought them to the U. S. and arranged for a meeting with President Reagan and national and international press and media attention. In 1986 full-page ARC ads in major newspapers called further attention to atrocities targeting Afghan civilians.

In the late 1980s, the Committee sponsored three international conferences that brought together private American and European relief agencies, U. S. and UN aid officials and Resistance aid administrators, in order to improve coordination of their programs. On behalf of private foundations and the National Endowment for Democracy, it also administered aid to Afghan scholarly organizations in Peshawar.

After the collapse of the Communist regime in 1992, it became difficult to raise funds or carry out aid projects. The ARC therefore decided to close down, although it retains legal title to the name Afghanistan Relief Committee. The legal technicalities were completed in January.

## AZIZ AHMAD ETEMADI Afghan Refugee

Aziz Ahmad Etemadi, 68, a brother of former Afghan prime minister Noor Etemadi who had lived in the Washington area since arriving in this country in 1980, died Jan. 24 at Alexandria Hospital. He had emphysema and diabetes.

Mr. Etemadi, who lived in Alexandria, was a native of Kabul, Afghanistan's capital. He studied at the Sorbonne and Lausanne University. Before coming to the United States, he had been an airport manager, education director of the Afghan Airport Authority and president of Bakhtar Airlines.

— Washington Post

## AFGHANISTAN COOKBOOK

Lily Jackson, daughter of Nake Kamrany, is writing an Afghan cookbook. She would like FORUM readers to send her recipes. If she uses your recipe, she'll send you a free copy of the finished cookbook.

Send your recipe to  
Lily Jackson  
5638 E. Sandy Lane  
Scottsdale, AZ 85254.

Be sure to include a return address.

News Briefs from AFGHANNews, Vol. 11, #12, November 1995:

An Afghan boxer won the second title in contest in an international contest in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Ahmad Javid won the silver medal in 71 kilogram class. Boxers from 22 countries participated in the contests.

The Government of Pakistan closed Islamia Madrasa (a religious school) in Peshawar and deported its Afghan teachers to Afghanistan. This decision was taken after the teachers of Islamia Madrasa refused to support the Taliban.

# THE BABURNAMA

*Memoirs of Babur, Prince and Emperor.*  
 Edited and translated by Wheeler M. Thackston.  
 Illustrated. 472 pp. New York:  
 Oxford University Press.  
 \$39.95.

By Robert Irwin

**I**N the month of Ramadan in the year 899 [June 1494], in the province of Fergana, in my 12th year I became king," Babur, then the emperor of Hindustan, writes in the early 16th century. He goes on to describe Fergana, the region just south of the Syr Darya river in Central Asia, as "situated on the edge of the civilized world." His father, the previous king of Fergana, had died when the terrace he was sitting on while admiring his racing pigeons collapsed into the ravine below.

From his obscure base in Fergana, the young Babur set out to conquer Samarkand, the splendor city that had been the capital of his great-great-grandfather, Timur, also known as Tamerlane, the terrifying would-be world conqueror. Babur did succeed in capturing Samarkand twice, but in the long run he was unable to hold it, and, while he was fighting for Samarkand, he lost Fergana to a treacherous relative. (The majority of his most dangerous enemies were relatives.) After years of penury and exile, he conquered a new kingdom, centered on Kabul in Afghanistan, but he also lost this territory while he was away warring in India. Finally, as a result of a famous battle at Panipat in 1526, he established what would become known as the Mogul Sultanate in northern India.

However, what Babur is most famous for today is not his campaigns and kingdoms, but his book, "The Baburnama." This is one of the classics of world literature. It is also a rare example of an autobiography produced in Islamic culture in pre-modern times. Why he wrote it remains a mystery. It has recently been suggested that it might have been meant as a sort of legitimizing document, drafted to present his case to rule over the lands once ruled by Timur. An alternative theory has it that the book is an example of the mirrors-for-princes genre, intended to give guidance to a princely readership on how to conduct oneself as ruler. Or perhaps the book was intended as a meditation on the nature of destiny? None of these theories is remotely convincing, for they all neglect the freshness and the personal detail that abound in "The Baburnama." Babur's account of the Turkish general who was especially good at leapfrog has no obvious bearing on the nature of destiny. His enthusiasm for melons and swimming does not really legitimize him as Timur's heir, while no previous example of an Islamic guide to princely conduct contains so much about vegetables, birds, landscapes, physiognomy, parties, songs or sex.

Babur, who could claim descent not only from Timur but also from Genghis Khan and was of mixed Turkish and Mongol descent, nevertheless lived in a region where the aristocratic elite were perfectly conversant with Persian. Persian was regarded as the language of civilization; poetry and a highly ornate artistic prose were normally written in it. Yet — and here is another mystery — Babur chose to write his memoir in Chagatai Turkish and in a style that is strikingly unaffected and modern in its feel. Although "The Baburnama" has not survived in its entirety, in its pages we are able to trace the parabola of Babur's life: we start with exciting night attacks, alarms, treasons and peril-

ous journeys through snowbound mountain passes made by a young man who was intensely ambitious, optimistic and careless about risking his life. In 1500, when Babur was 17, he was married to a girl he had been betrothed to as a child. "Since it was my first marriage and I was bashful, I went to her only once every 10, 15 or 20 days. Later on I lost my fondness for her altogether. . . . Once every month or 40 days my mother the khamin drove me to her with all the severity of a quartermaster." At about the same time Babur fell passionately in love with a beautiful boy who worked in the market. He wandered about bareheaded and barefoot, deranged with passion, and, although he was too shy ever to speak to this boy, the first rush of sexual desire coincided with the onset of the poetic impulse. Writing poetry, together with fighting, hunting and eating fruit, was to remain a lifelong enthusiasm.

The last sections of "The Baburnama" are more melancholy. Babur was now master of Hindustan, but the "cities and provinces of Hindustan are all unpleasant." "The one nice aspect of Hindustan is that it is a large country with lots of gold and money." A melon sent from Kabul made him weep at the thought of all that he had lost: the cities of Kabul and Samarkand — and his youth. He was now in poor health, suffering from recurrent problems with his teeth, ears and stomach. He took opium for medicinal reasons. He occasionally ate *majun*, a concoction made from hashish, sometimes instead of wine, sometimes together with wine. The story of his struggles with wine forms an important part of "The Baburnama." In its pages, accounts of roaring-drunk parties in gardens or on river-borne rafts alternate with desperate attempts by Babur to give up alcohol and make peace with Allah. Babur's frank narration of both his vows to reform himself and of his repeated backslidings prefigure and challenge comparison with that of the great Scottish diarist James Boswell.

**T**HIS new translation has been handsomely produced and, though the original Chagatai Turkish is inaccessible to me, Wheeler M. Thackston's translation reads well and is a great improvement on Annette Beveridge's 1905 version. However, the general reader should be warned that this is not a book to be dutifully read page by page. Rather, parts of Babur's story should be rapidly skimmed, while others should be savored. On the one hand one often comes across passages like this: "A few months later, Sayyid-Badr, Khusravshah and some other warriors led by Ahmad Mushtaq took Sultan-Mahmud Mirza and fled with him to Qambar-Ali Beg in Hissar. Thereafter the region to the south of the Iron Gates and the Kohtan Mountains, that is, Termez, Chaghaniyan, Hissar, Khuttalan, Konduz and Badakhshan up to the Hindu Kush range, was under Sultan-Mahmud Mirza's control."

On the other hand, Babur's visual sensibility had been trained by his profession of poetry and his connoisseurship of Persian miniature painting, and perhaps also heightened by occasional drug taking. He could write like this: "Nothing but purple flowers were blooming in some places, and only yellow in other areas. Sometimes the yellow and the purple blossomed together like gold fleck. We sat on a rise near the camp and just looked at the fields." Or like this: "Another kind of parrot is a beautiful bright red. There are other colors too. Since I do not remember exactly what they are, I haven't written them in detail. The red one is nicely shaped. It can be taught to talk, but unfortunately its voice is unpleasant and shrill as a piece of broken china dragged across a brass tray." In such passages, he

BOOK  
 REVIEW

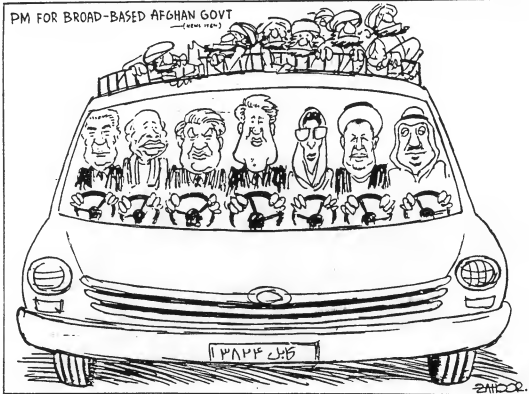
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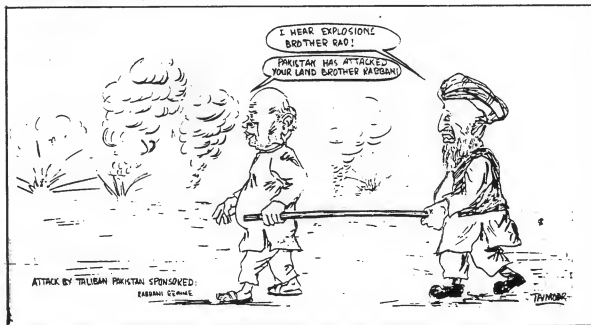
Robert Irwin's most recent books are "The Arabian Nights: A Companion" and a novel, "Exquisite Corpse."

anticipated in literary form the astonishing achievements of the naturalistic school of Mogul miniaturists who were to paint under the patronage of Babur's magnificent descendants in India. □





THE MUSLIM Tuesday, November 28, 1995



THE NEWS  
R/Pindi/Islamabad

12/1/95

NEWS PUNCH



with the aim of consolidating Pakistani, and by extension, American influence in the region.

"The Central Asian countries have struck it rich in oil and American companies are engaged in exploration there," said Janjit Singh, director of the state-funded Indian Institute of Defense Studies and Analyses. "Afghanistan provides the shortest route to Central Asia."

Singh's remarks followed an accusation by Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, Salman Khursheed, that Pakistan was directly involved in the Taleban movement, a claim which Afghanistan has been making for months. The Indian analysts have charged that the Taleban has received extensive support from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan with the direct backing of the United States. While no one has ever acknowledged that they support the Taleban, the movement mysteriously appeared late last year well equipped with jets, tanks, and other heavy weaponry in a strong indication that they received support from some outside power.

"It is very clear that the Taleban are not just students who got up to say that we will put things rights," said Khursheed. "They have a very definite agenda and are being helped in that definite agenda by Pakistan."

## India's Role

Pakistan has denied the charges and countered that India has been fueling Afghanistan's bloody war.

"India is helping the Kabul administration in its bid to flare up the conflict. For this purpose, India has a regular aerial contact from New Delhi to Kabul's Bagram air base," Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto charged. "We hope all such tactics will fail and the ultimate victory will be those of the Afghan masses."

India has denied sending weapons to Afghanistan but has conceded that it does regularly send food and medical supplies to Kabul. Indian officials have also suggested that India, Iran and Russia develop a strategy to prevent the Taleban from taking Kabul.

## MUSLIM WORLD MONITOR

October 20, 1995

# What next in Afghanistan?

THE BATTLE for Kabul even if it has not yet reached a dead end, seems to be heading fast towards a stalemate. This latest battle of attrition irrespective of all the claims and counter-claims of success is daring no more than add to the heap of the miseries under which the people of Afghanistan have been groaning for well over one decade. There is not much time left for the Taliban, for the winter has set in and very soon they would discover their crippling disadvantage if not the impossibility of fighting in the open against an intransigent Rabbani's sheltered troops. That could happen within a couple of weeks if not over the next few days. Rabbani has already shown that he would much rather see Kabul pounded into rubble than quit the town and save its unfortunate residents from death and destruction. The situation raises the logical question: What next?

The Taliban could be sincere in their perception of the Afghan nation's disillusionment with every war-lord in their country. The nation could be wishing disappearance of all the war-lords who seem to be unaware of their destructive contribution to the prospects of Afghanistan. All the same the war-lords are a reality and cannot be wished away. In their puritanical zeal the Taliban seem to be ignoring the reality that in human affairs the choice is not always between good and evil; quite often it is between bad and worse. Their insistence upon going it alone and rejecting all former Soviet surrogates and ex-mujahideen involved in the current struggle, has worked to the advantage of their foremost adversary - Burhanuddin Rabbani. They seem to be oblivious to the looming danger of the battle of attrition reducing them in public perception to no more than yet another blood thirsty faction.

More than anything else, the Taliban do not seem to have thought it through. Even if Kabul falls to them, it would not be secure for them a surrender of Rabbani's faction comprising largely Tajiks. Under-

standably most of the Tajiks extol Rabbani and Ahmed Shah Masud as national heroes, for the two are the only Tajiks to emerge larger than life in Afghan horizon after Bacha Sakka. Besides, being almost one-third of the Afghan population, the Tajiks are the second largest ethnic group in Afghanistan where tribalism still rules the roost.

It is true that Rabbani is not helping any by making a spurious offer of stepping down. He wants to quit only to climb back to power. The 28 names for the proposed Interim Council he gave to UN Secretary General's Special Representative Mehmood Mestiri, included 18 of his loyalists. But irrespective of Rabbani's antics, it should not be out of place for Mestiri to suggest bluntly to him that the four points jointly suggested by Afghanistan's well-wishers were the only escape from the blood soaked current scenario. It is hard for Afghanistan's friends to oppose the suggestion that the proposed Interim Council to take over from Rabbani, should be a truly representative body reflecting the ground realities in Afghanistan. Logically this council should reflect both the ethnic composition of Afghanistan as also the extent of territory controlled by each warring faction. The remaining three points - entrusting of a demilitarised Kabul to an Afghan neutral security force, the taking over of heavy weapons by this force and demilitarising of whole of Afghanistan in phases - cannot but be supported by all patriotic Afghans and their well-wishers. Should Rabbani reject the suggestion, the UN Secretary General must identify him as the culprit and bless all efforts to knock some sense into his intransigent head. While Rabbani should not be deprived of the legitimate Tajik share, he should not be allowed to usurp what belongs with equal legitimacy to his other compatriots. The UN must fulfil its responsibility of halting the Afghan carnage. The blood letting has gone on much too long.

**The Muslim 12/77**

HERE IS A NEW  
PEACE FORMULA...



October 26, 1995

## Afghanistan's chronic problem

**O**nly a fool would envy the job of Mahmud Mestiri, the head of the United Nations Special Mission for Afghanistan. He is assigned the task of bringing peace to a country that is at war with itself. He has been vainly plodding the diplomatic course to stitch together a broad-based national government in Afghanistan that is both representative and effective.

And though he has been unable to move even an inch forward, he still believes that there is light of hope at the end of the tunnel of disappointments. In an interview with The News in New York, he sounded upbeat about the prospects of his peace mission, which he said would be strengthened once the draft resolution on Afghanistan at the UN General Assembly is adopted. The resolution authorises his mission to persist with reconciliation and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.

But while such resolutions may lift Mestiri's spirits, these cannot brighten up the chances of normalcy in the strife-ridden country. The plan that Mestiri is peddling attempts to do the impossible: to bring the Afghan groups around the negotiating table and merge them to wind down from their years-old positions. In the past, similar attempts to gain the divided Afghans together — the famous Islamabad and Peshawar accords — failed miserably to achieve this end. Nothing on the ground has changed to suggest that Mestiri can do it now what could not be done previously.

That, however, is not an argument for packing up the UN mission and abandoning Afghanistan. If nothing else, the Mission has a huge symbolic significance. It shows that the world cares about the people of a country who are reaping the bitter harvest of fighting history's biggest proxy war. It also ensures that Afghanistan does not become a goat among the buzka-shi-playing regional powers that have been trying to mark their domains of influence.

What it does argue for is that the diplomatic effort to find peace in Afghanistan ought to focus more on the outside parties, primarily, Pakistan and Iran. These two countries along with the Taliban have to reach an agreement on what needs to be done in Afghanistan. As experience suggests, the tussle among Afghanistan's external actors has always spilled inside the country, aggravating its peace problems.

Once issues have been sorted out between Iran and Pakistan — the ground for which has been smoothed after high-level official dialogue between the two, starting from Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's recent Tehran visit — it will be easier to put the elements of a practical peace plan into place. It will also be easier to block the negative engagement of India in Afghanistan, which is worsening an already bad situation.

**NEWS 12/21**



# Raphel fails to make it to Kabul

From Behroz Khan

PESHAWAR: US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, Robin Raphel could not manage to land in Kabul on Monday to meet Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani and was flown to Bagram airbase in a UN special plane to see former defence minister Ahmad Shah Masood.

Masood was scheduled to visit Kabul in the morning having a overnight stay at Haji Qadeer's Jalalabad house on Sunday where she had air dashed from Mazar-i-Sharif in the evening. The American held detailed talks with Rashid Dostum and later with Governor Nangarhar, Haji Qadeer, Maulavi Yunas Khalis, Maulavi Muhammadi and Prof Sayyaf to discuss future prospects of Afghan crisis. Qadeer, sources said, told the visiting American that the crisis would not end until Rabbani-Sayyaf duo quits.

Her visit to Kabul, sources said, was cancelled due to security problems as Taliban students militia, armed with 'anti-aircraft weapons, have besieged Afghan capital for over a month. Raphel was received at Bagram airbase by Masood and Afghanistan's deputy foreign minister Ghafoorzai. She flew back to Peshawar the same day.

In Jalalabad, Ms Raphel told local TV that her country was still concerned about Afghanistan and was interested in restoration of peace in the war shattered country. "We have no favourite among Afghan groups and my country was fully behind UN efforts to resolve the crisis", Raphel told in a brief TV interview. It is still not clear whether the US official has any plan to meet Taliban leaders in Kandahar or holds talks with representatives in Pakistan.

She also plans to meet Hikmatyar party's as Hezb-i-Islami has already assigned the job to Qutuddin Hllal, deputy to Hikmatyar. Raphel is expected to meet UN special envoy on Afghanistan Mahmoud Mestiri in Islamabad on Friday.

US official, reporters informed, was cautious in making comments

when asked whether or not her country was interested in bringing former Afghan king back.

Her earlier comments which were reported in a local Pashto newspaper on Monday quoting Raphel as saying that Zahir Shah was too old and could not run a government in Afghanistan effectively, however, sent a wave of resentment among Afghans, specially supporters of Zahir Shah.

**APP adds:** Raphel said the latest proposal calls for the resignation of President Burhanuddin Rabbani and the creation of an interim ruling council made up of various warring factional leaders.

"I have had a long discussion with commander Masoud covering many issues," Raphel said. "We are talking about various options for transfer of power." The US is eager to help establish a stable Afghanistan, in part to curio the spread of warring factions. In other parts of South Asia, Raphel said.

She cited fears of Afghanistan being used as a training ground for terrorists and country's already massive drug cultivation industry. "We have a very strong foreign policy interest in seeing a stable Afghanistan," she said. She said Washington would be prepared to

provide assistance for reconstruction "when peace and security are restored."

Before meeting here with Masood, Raphel held talks with two regional leaders — Uzbek General Abdul Rashid Dostam in his northern stronghold of Mazar-e-Sarif and Abdul Qadir, governor of eastern city of Jalalabad.

Raphel also strongly denied suggestions that the United States had abandoned Afghanistan following the 1989 Soviet pullout and the end of the Cold War. "It's unfair to say we've lost interest in Afghanistan," she said. "We have a very strong foreign policy interest in seeing a stable Afghanistan."

"With an unstable Afghanistan comes "the potential for the instability to spill over into the region," she said. Related problems include "narcotics cultivation and trafficking" and "training camps for terrorists who then move out of Afghanistan into other parts of the world," she added.

Meanwhile, Rabbani officials Monday claimed its forces had destroyed three Taliban jets. The government claim could not be immediately confirmed.

## THE NEWS

R'Pindi/Islamabad.

10/31/95



# Heavy Fighting Continues on Outskirts of Kabul

The Afghan government has held the Taliban rebels to positions just outside the capital of Kabul during three weeks of heavy fighting as the United States undertook its highest-level negotiations in Afghanistan in years, the United Nations maintained its efforts to forge a ceasefire and transfer of power, and Afghan President Burhannudin Rabbani began negotiations with neutral Afghan factions and repeated his stance that he is willing to step down if a "reasonable mechanism" is in place.

During more than two months of setbacks, Rabbani's forces have been reduced to holding well under one-fourth of Afghanistan's territory. Government forces currently only control Kabul and the provinces of Parwan and Kapissa its immediate north. It however seems likely that the government may soon recapture

Bamiyan province to the northwest of Kabul from the Shiite Hezb al-Wahdat which captured it in mid-October.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, Robin Raphel, undertook a tour of Afghanistan in late October during which she met with government and rebel military leaders. While the United States officially claims that it has no favorites among the different Afghan factions, there have been allegations that the Taliban are being secretly funded and supported by the United States through Pakistan.

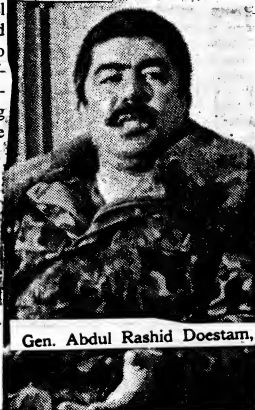
## Robin Raphel Meets Dustum

Raphel began her tour in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif

where she met opposition warlord Abdul Rashid Dustum. Soon after the meeting, Dustum announced that if Rabbani had not stepped down in two weeks time, he would join the attack on Kabul. Attempts to negotiate a military alliance between Dustum and the Taliban are said to be well advanced though they have not yet been successful. The Taliban and Dustum now control nearly three-fourths of Afghanistan. A dual attack on Kabul could be fatal for the government.

From the  
MUSLIM WORLD  
MONITOR

11/3/95



Gen. Abdul Rashid Doestam,

## Meeting With U.S. Official, Dustum Says He May Join Attack on Capital

"There is a limit to how long we can wait," Dustum said on Oct. 31. "Two weeks should be enough to prove whether Rabbani will resign, otherwise we will have to consider other options. We cannot sit back."

Dustum-Taliban negotiations have been going on since June, but there are many obstacles to an alliance, including the fact that when the Taliban emerged last year one of their biggest complaints was the willingness of both Rabbani and Hezb al-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmetyar to even countenance working with Dustum, a former communist general who heads an ethnic Uzbek militia and inherited the bulk of the former communist government's army. However to what extent such statements were based on principle or mere political posturing is unclear. In the past, the Taliban also criticized the bombing of civilians yet when given the chance they heavily bombarded civilian districts in Kabul.

"We had long talks with the

Taliban and so far there is nothing to suggest that we cannot work together," Dustum said after his meeting with Raphel. "We have discussed power-sharing arrangements."

## Positions of Russia and Uzbekistan

Dustum is however heavily dependent on Russia and Uzbekistan both of whom are very wary of the Taliban which they have described as an extension of Pakistani and American influence. Dustum has acknowledged that both Russia and Uzbekistan have pressed him to join forces with the government against the Taliban. It is very unlikely that Dustum would do anything to upset Russia and Uzbekistan unless he was assured of another source of funding and weaponry. It is still not clear whether Raphel promised Dustum such support from the United States.

Meanwhile aides to Rabbani have held a series of meetings in the eastern town of Jalalabad with neutral factions, most notably the Younis Khalis faction of the Hezb al-Islami.

Abdurrah Rasul Sayyaf, leader of the Ittehad-i-Islami party and a Rabbani ally, and government minister Mohammad Sediq Chakari have met with Khalis as well as the neutral Harakat Inqilab-i-Islami faction and a neutral council ruling the Nangarhar province, of which Jalalabad is the capital. Nangarhar is the only Afghan province administered by a neutral council and all Afghan factions are represented in the city making it an ideal spot for negotiations.

## Jalalabad Negotiations

It has been rumored that Rabbani's delegation was discussing a possible transfer of power, but it was not clear if the team had any

contact with Taliban leaders in Jalalabad or the larger Hezb al-Islami faction led by Hekmetyar. It is possible that Khalis is playing an intermediate role between Rabbani and other factions.

Rabbani has said in the past that he is willing to step down in favor of a "reasonable mechanism" consisting of an interim council representing different Afghan factions.

U.N. special envoy Mahmoud Mestiri has been trying to persuade all factions to accept at least a temporary ceasefire to allow negotiations to take place on a transfer of power from Rabbani. However Rabbani as well as other Islamic factions including those led by Hekmetyar, Khalis, and Sayyaf have in the past criticized U.N. efforts to install a secular, royalist government. The recent Jalalabad negotiations were initiated by Rabbani and, according to Rabbani spokesman Aziz Morad, had nothing to do with Mestiri's efforts.

MWM 11/3

# Dostum plays the kingmaker in Afghanistan

By Fahd Husain

ISLAMABAD—In the complex hotch potch of Afghan military politics, the only certainty is more uncertainty. However, for the last few months, all roads, including those from Islamabad and Tehran, seem to be leading to one place—Mazar-e-Sharif, the headquarters of the powerful Uzbek warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum.

In the present situation, Dostum is playing the role of a kingmaker. A former Communist who is also perhaps the only Afghan leader with a penchant for exquisitely tailored double-breasted suits and flashy ties, Dostum is busy receiving delegations from Kabul, Tehran and Islamabad, all wanting him to throw his weight behind them. But so far, Dostum has preferred to keep his cards close to his chest and remain non-committal—at least militarily. He can afford to do so.

The reason is simple: in an evenly-matched struggle for dominance between President Burhanuddin Rabbani and the Taliban, Dostum can tilt the balance in favour of whomsoever he opts to join. With a battle-hardened force of Uzbeks supported by a considerable array of fighter aircraft at his disposal, Dostum has the might to become the deciding player if he jumps into the fray. All sides are therefore making a bee-line to Mazar-e-Sharif to court his favour.

The latest to do so is Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Alaaddin Broujerdi who held talks with him in order to win him over to Rabbani's camp. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Sardar Asseff Ali has already travelled to Mazar-e-Sharif twice, the last time coinciding with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's trip to Iran. Prime Minister Bhutto

had jetted straight from Tehran to Uzbekistan for a day trip. The reason for this airdash was not difficult to comprehend: Uzbekistan wields a tremendous amount of influence on Dostum because of the ethnic connection. In addition, it is an open secret that Uzbekistan has consistently been providing diplomatic, military and financial support to Dostum. Some say, Uzbekistan is Dostum's lifeline; his source of power and clout.

So far, Pakistan appears to have an edge over Iran as far as Dostum is concerned. Uzbeks are one of the three main ethnic groups which constitute Afghanistan, the other two being the

Pukhtoos and the Tajiks. Strategists maintain that as long two of the three are together, Afghanistan can never break up; such an eventuality only arising when all three decide to go their own ways. For Pakistan too, the prime concern has been to keep at least two of the three on its side. With Rabbani and his Tajiks openly hostile to Islamabad, it is vital that Dostum is kept on board. Pukhtoos have traditionally sided with Pakistan; their geographical proximity to (and thus economic dependence on) Pakistan being a foremost reason.

On the surface, Dostum has been indulging in anti-Rabbani rhetoric, which is music to Pakistan's ears. In a condolence message sent to Pakistan after the ransacking of the Pakistani embassy in Kabul, Dostum had accused Rabbani of the act and had condemned him in strong words. In the same vein, he has again held Rabbani responsible for the Peshawar bomb blast and in yet another condolence message to Pakistan, stated in plain words that it is the doing of the Kabul regime "which is not sincere to its own country".

## Rabbani's delegation holds talks with Dostum in Mazar-i-Sharif

From Rahmullah Yusufzai

PESHAWAR: For the first time in over two years, a high-level delegation of the Rabbani government reached Mazar-i-Sharif in northern Afghanistan late Friday to hold reconciliation talks with Gen. Rasheed Dostum.

Informed sources said the delegation included Dr Abdul Rahman, a close aide of Kabul's top military commander Ahmad Shah Masood, President Rabbani's spokesman Aziz Murad and Shiite leader Ustad Akbari, who heads the breakaway Hezb-i-Wahdat faction.

Dr Abdul Rahman's plane reportedly landed in Mazar-i-Sharif shortly after the arrival of Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Alaaddin Broujerdi, who has been striving to mediate between Rabbani and Dostum for a couple of months. In fact, Broujerdi's present trip, fourth in the current month, was aimed at convincing

But these friendly gestures towards Pakistan have not translated into Dostum actually joining hands with the Taliban to oust Rabbani from Kabul. Perhaps Pakistan was counting on this eventuality and thus issuing confident statements about the imminent fall of Kabul. Perhaps Pakistan had not taken into account the 'strange complexities of Afghan rivalries.

If Rabbani has been spitting venom against Dostum in the past, the Taliban have not been far behind. Rabbani had gone as far as to have a *Fatwa* pronounced against Dostum by a Saudi cleric. But Taliban too had stated that they would never join forces with a (former) Communist and a "Kafir". In recent days both the Taliban and Rabbani have toned down their rhetoric against Dostum. But old wounds heal slowly. Kabul, Kandahar, Islamabad and Tehran, all realise that Dostum holds the trump card, the key to power. But Dostum too is aware of this. It is thus not surprising that the more people run to him, the more he will play hard-to-get.

NATION 12/31/95

Dostum to receive Rabbani in Mazar-i-Sharif.

It was learnt that Dr Abdul Rahman's trip to Mazar-i-Sharif was designed to pave the way for Rabbani's visit. Sources in Mazar-i-Sharif said that despite Broujerdi's efforts Dostum was reluctant to receive Dr Abdul Rahman in Mazar-i-Sharif. However, it seems an understanding was eventually reached and the plane carrying the delegation from Kabul was allowed to land in Mazar-i-Sharif. Still the delegation kept waiting in the aircraft at the airport for about 20 minutes until clearance was obtained from Dostum. Later, the delegation was flown to Shiberghan in a helicopter for a meeting with Dostum. The delegation flew back to Kabul Saturday morning. Broujerdi was scheduled to fly out of Mazar-i-Sharif by Saturday evening.

Sources said the meeting between Dostum and Dr Abdul Rahman was tense and unproductive. The two sides made complaints against each other and recalled how they were let down in the past. Dostum reportedly pointed out how he was dubbed an infidel and communist by Kabul and 'Jehad' was declared against him. Dr Abdul Rahman is reported to have complained that Dostum joined their

enemies and fought against the Kab-bani government.

The meeting was inconclusive due to the fact that Dostum wanted to consult Hezb-i-Islami chief Gulbaddin Hekmatyar and Hezb-i-Wahdat leader Karim Khalili, his two allies in the Supreme Coordination Council of Islamic Revolution of Afghanistan (SCCIRA) before making up his mind about reconciliation with Rabbani. The SCCIRA has in the past demanded unconditional resignation of President Rabbani, formation of a neutral interim government and removal of Rabbani-Masood forces from Kabul.

Even if there was no immediate breakthrough in the talks between Dostum and Dr Abdur Rahman, the very fact that a high-level delegation landed in Mazar-i-Sharif after over two years was in itself a major development. Dr Abdur Rahman had sometime back met Dostum in Tashkent and Moscow with Russians acting as mediators but this was the first time that he was received in Dostum's northern Afghanistan citadel.

On Friday, Dr Abdur Rahman held talks with Hezb-i-Wahdat chief Karim Khalili in Bamian province. Apparently, that meeting was also arranged by Broujerdi, who appears to be keen for luring Rabbani's opponents into joining a broad-based government so that it wins some legitimacy.

AFP adds: Iran has urged Dostum to promote a settlement to the Afghan civil war through talks with Rabbani, Dostum's spokesman said Saturday.

Dostum told Broujerdi Friday that he was not against negotiations "involving" all Afghan groups including the Taliban, said the spokesman, Sibghatullah Zaki.

Zaki said Dostum will personally attend a meeting of the four-party Afghan opposition coalition due in Mazar-i-Sharif Tuesday to decide a response to Rabbani's offer for talks with rivals.

Dostum's National Islamic Movement is part of the coalition, called the Supreme Coordination Council of the Islamic Revolution in Afghanistan (SCCIRA).

Other members of the alliance are former Afghan Premier Gulbaddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami, former President Sibghatullah Mojaddedi's Jabbar Nijat-e-Milli and the Shiite Hezb-i-Wahdat faction.

NEWS 12/31

# Where is Ahmed Shah Masood?

FROM ISMAIL KHAN

PESHAWAR: Where is Ahmad Shah Masood, the Afghan military commander who is the force behind the beleaguered government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani?

This is the most frequently-asked question by Afghans and others who keep a close watch on the events in Afghanistan. For the last over two weeks, Taliban leaders at their head office in Kandahar while quoting information from the besieged Afghan capital Kabul say Masood was seriously wounded during fierce fighting in early October when Taliban in their second push captured some strategic positions around Kabul and was subsequently flown either to India or France for medical treat-

ment. Since long, Masood's terms with the French are known to be good, therefore there are some rumours that he has been flown to France for medical treatment. Pakistan on November 27 had ordered a French aid agency Madera to close down its operations after intelligence reports charged that it was assisting Rabbani and Masood.

A top-ranking Taliban leader Maulvi Ihsanullah claims Masood has been killed but says that announcement to the effect would not be made until its confirmation. He, like other Taliban leaders, asked journalists to verify whether Masood has been seen in public in the last two weeks and ascertained his whereabouts. An Afghan Pushto newspaper also reported Masood having been wounded in the fighting and that Kabul television has not reported about his activities of late. These events have fueled the speculations about the whereabouts of Masood. Known more as a military commander rather than a politician, Rabbani's top-gun prefers a low profile and makes occasional appearance on television. A Kabul-based foreign correspondent confirmed having not seen the military commander for quite some time.

Kabul's defence minister had been the most famous military commander during the Afghan Jihad and had been referred to as the 'Lion of Pan-

jsher'. Those who watch the Afghan situation wonder how would that country look like sans Masood. Taliban believe if he is really dead, Rabbani's government is gone.



NEWS 12/30

## Taliban publicly execute murderer

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR — Taliban under Islamic punishment of Qisas executed a murderer by putting him before a firing squad in Pul-i-Alam, Logar, in the first week of the new year.

Taliban sources said here a few months ago Abdul Rahim had murdered Mohammad Shafiq over a pity dispute in Pul-i-Alam area of Logar province. The relatives of the deceased reported the matter to local Taliban shooras. Within a week the murderer Abdul Rahim was arrested and after a trial he was awarded death penalty in public.

On Thursday the governor of Logar Maulvi Mohammad Kabir during a public meeting at Pul-i-Alam read out the verdict of Taliban Qazis. Before the execution Taliban leaders sought the opinion of the relatives of the deceased. However, they refused to forgive the murderer or accept the Diyat (compensation money). Later in the presence of hundreds of people the brother of the deceased was given a klashnikov, who carried out the execution by firing several shots at the murderer.

Speaking on the occasion, the Taliban leaders said their aim was to enforce Shariat in Afghanistan.



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#### ABBREVIATIONS USED

ACEBAR	- Agency Coordinating Bureau for Afghan Relief
AIG	- Afghan Interim Government
BIA	- Bakhtar Information Agency
CC	- Central Committee
CSM	- Christian Science Monitor
DYOA	- Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan
FBIS	- Foreign Broadcasting Information Service
FRG	- Federal Republic of Germany
ICRC	- Int'l Committee of the Red Cross
KT	- Kabul Times
LAT	- Los Angeles Times
NGO	- Non-Governmental Organization
NWFP	- Northwest Frontier Province
NYT	- New York Times
OIC	- Organization of Islamic Conference
PCV	- Peace Corps Volunteer
PDPA	- People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PT	- Pakistan Times
PVO	- Private Voluntary Organization
RC	- Revolutionary Council
ROA	- Republic of Afghanistan
SCMP	- South China Morning Post
UNGA	- United Nations General Assembly
UNOCA	- United Nations Office of the Commissioner for Afghanistan [sometimes UNOCHA]
UNHCR	- United Nations High Commission for Refugees
WSJ	- Wall Street Journal

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